DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 451 FL 009 922

AUTHOR	Hawkins, Eric, Ed.; Perren, G. E., Ed.
TITLE	Intensive Language Teaching in Schools. Teaching Languages 1.
INSTITUTION	Centre for Information on Language Teaching, London (England).
PUB DATE	78
NOTE	135p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1 5AP, England
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$7.35 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Communicative Competence (Languages); Conversational Language Courses; *Course Descriptions; Curriculum Planning; French; German; *Immersion Programs; *Intensive Language Courses; *Language Instruction; Language of Instruction; Language Proficiency; *Program Descriptions; Remedial Courses; Russian; *Second Language Learning; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS	England

ABSTRACT

The papers in this volume concerning intensive language teaching are grouped into three sections: "Sections bilingues," "Intensive courses within schools," and "Intensive courses at external centres." A preliminary chapter by Eric Hawkins introduces the historical context of intensive language teaching and a concluding chapter by Harry Ree, "Aspects of Intensive Language Experience," emphasizes the wider purpose of learning languages. The papers in the main sections of the volume are the following: (1) "The Goethe Gymnasium, Frankfurt," by H. Fischer-Wollpert; (2) "Mill hill School," by W. Winfield; (3) "Goffs School," by C.G. Hadley; (4) "Haygrove Comprehensive School," by A. King; (5) "King's Manor School," by B. Matthews; (6) "Archbishop Michael Ramsey School," by D. Cross; (7) "Intensive Russian, York," by D. Rix; (8) "A French Remedial Course, York," by B. Howson; (9) "Reciprocal French, York," by M. Dalwood; (10) "French and German, Somerset," by B. King; (11) "Residential Weeks in French, Pimlico School," by R. Townsend; (12) "A Two-day Oral French Course, West Sussex," by D. Maddock; (13) "One-day Intensive Courses, Leicestershire," by D. Sidwell; and (14) "Intensive Courses in Hertfordshire," by V. M. Howe. (AMH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Teaching Languages 1

ED165451

Intensive language teaching in schools

FL009922

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mrs. Barbara Manson
Publications Officer

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Collected and edited by Eric Hawkins and G E Perren

Contents

			Page
	Editor's introduction	G E Perren	5
1.	Intensive teaching of foreign languages	Eric Hawkins	8

Part one: Sections bilingues

2.	The Goethe Gymnasium, Frankfurt	H Fischer-Wollpert	19
3.	Mill Hill School	William Winfield	26
4.	Goffs School	C G Hadley	38
5.	Haygrove Comprehensive School	Ann King	43

Part two: Intensive courses within schools

6.	King's Manor School	Betty Matthews	58
7.	Archbishop Michael Ramsey School	David Cross	61

Part three: Intensive courses at external centres

8.	Intensive Russian, York	David Rix	76
9.	A French remedial course, York	Bryan Howson	84
10.	Reciprocal French, York	Mary Dalwood	89
11.	French and German, Somerset	Barrie King	96
12.	Residential weeks in French, Pimlico School	Richard Townsend	107
13.	A two-day oral French course, West Sussex	D P G Maddock	114
14.	One-day intensive courses, Leicestershire	D Sidwell	117
15.	Intensive courses in Hertfordshire	V M Howe	120

Part four: Conclusion

16.	Aspects of intensive language experience	Harry Rée	126
	Bibliography		131

Editor's introduction

G E Perren

The mere use of the term *intensive teaching* raises questions, for one might assume that all teaching should be intensive - in the sense that it should be concentrated, closely related to clearly defined aims and demand hard work. Clearly, however, that is not the only sense in which it is used in this collection; from the examples described in the following chapters, one may try to identify certain characteristics which differentiate 'intensive' from 'normal' language teaching.

First, there is concentration of time, often into large continuous blocks. As Professor Hawkins points out in Chapter 1, a main disadvantage of the normal school timetabling of foreign language teaching is the 'gale of English' which intervenes between the scattered periods of foreign languages. Continuous, as distinct from intermittent, concentration helps to make immediate gains more permanent.

Secondly, there may be a concentration on particular modes or skills which need practice - often those of speech - for periods far longer than can be provided in a global course. (An important aspect is that pupils are thus made aware of their own progress with all that this means for their self-confidence).

Thirdly, and this may be most important of all, intensive teaching often implies the use of the foreign language for some other purpose than merely learning it. The boredom of much normal teaching lies in its reliance on tedious practice or exercises, often cunningly devised to promote memorisation against future examination needs, and with emphasis on grammatical accuracy at the expense of communication. It is notable how many of the contributors below rate communication more highly than accuracy of forms used. This view is common sense when applied to a pupil speaking his own mother-tongue: it is however **un**common good sense when applied to a foreign language.

Most of the contributors emphasise how intensive teaching has improved the morale of pupils and teachers alike, especially when depressed by prolonged non-achievement. And this seems especially true of the less academic pupils. One cannot too often recall that much language learning in schools is a contrived and artificial occupation. Indeed, most people, given the opportunity, can learn languages far better out of school than in school and in these conditions success in learning languages has very little relationship to 'ability' in its general educational sense. The psychological value of holding intensive courses **outside** the normal school environment is indicated particularly in chapters 8 to 15.

The papers have been grouped into sections, prefaced by a chapter by Professor Hawkins which stresses the historical context, and concluded by one from Mr Rée which emphasises the wider purpose of learning languages, and particularly of doing so successfully.

Thus, chapters 2 to 5 describe *sections bilingues* - the fullest intensive treatment in fact - based on the premise that languages are learned best through their use and through employing them as a medium for teaching other subjects. Dr Fischer-Wollpert provides an example from Germany based on a philosophy with which few foreign language teachers would disagree: his pupils must be prepared for life in a multinational community. Notably, he emphasises the value of having a foreign teacher, which authenticates the use of a foreign language as the teaching medium. In Britain, Mill Hill School has operated a *section bilingue* since 1972, in which nearly half the boys entering the school now participate. Mr Winfield shows how this has been successfully organised with selected pupils. Dr Hadley describes three years' work at Goffs School on similar but more limited lines; like others he notes that parental encouragement and support are important for success. Mrs King's chapter describes work at Haygrove School since 1973, where the scheme has been extended to mixed ability groups with success. In all cases, the subjects chosen for bilingual instruction are geography and history.

The second section includes two examples which show how in large schools a curricular/timetable adjustment can permit intensive teaching (without however aiming at bilingual instruction). At King's Manor School the special provision was limited to those taking '0' level examinations. But at Archbishop Michael Ramsey School a complex scheme affecting the whole school, covering both German and French, fully utilises the additional time made available, using a modular syllabus to economise staff time. By this means all foreign language teaching in the school is intensified. Such adjustments may be what is most urgently required to secure the future of foreign languages in the curriculum. No doubt there are other examples. (CILT would always like to hear of them, so that they could be made widely known).

Chapters 8 to 15 provide examples of intensive courses organised outside the normal school classes and aimed to replace or support them. Three examples of such work organised by the Language Teaching Centre of the University of York are described. In one (Chapter 8) a one-year

Russian course to '0' level is provided for pupils from local schools where this language cannot be taught. This course begins with several days' total immersion. Another (Chapter 9) provides a five-day remedial course in French for CSE or '0' level candidates, which overlaps into the school holidays. The third is a two-week reciprocal course in which equal numbers of French and English seventeen-year-olds live and work together to improve each other's English and French. Chapter 11 describes French and German courses provided for sixth formers by the Somerset Language Centre. Chapter 12 records the provision made by Pimlico School for short residential French courses for pupils of mixed ability. Chapter 13 covers a two-day residential course in oral French in Sussex for fifth and sixth year pupils. Chapter 14 deals with one-day courses provided in Leicestershire for sixth formers. Chapter 15, unlike the others, describes courses for primary school children, which have been held in Hertfordshire for some years past, as well as some courses for older pupils. In many of these courses the importance of the LEA adviser will be obvious, not merely in facilitating the organisation of inter-school courses, but in actively contributing to their content.

This book results very much from the enthusiasm and encouragement of Professor Hawkins, who initiated its design and assembled the collection. Several of the papers were originally prepared for the January 1977 conference of the Joint Council of Language Associations and have since been revised and extended. Others have been produced specially for this collection. But together they present a valuable corrective to the all too common picture of foreign language teaching in schools languishing, debilitated by confusion of aims, vague objectives and underachievement, and thus losing its attraction for pupils, especially in comprehensive schools.

Refreshingly, few of the writers are dogmatic about particular teaching techniques or methodology, and one may perhaps guess that, given the time and the opportunity, the techniques required by intensive teaching tend to look after themselves. The most important ingredient is clearly the will and enthusiasm of teachers, and a readiness to adapt, improvise and use hitherto untapped resources.

1. Intensive teaching of foreign languages

Eric Hawkins

On the face of it teaching a foreign language in 40-minute lessons, four times a week, which has been the common pattern in schools, makes the teacher's task very difficult.

Picture the teacher's daily problem. His class arrives in the foreign language classroom, babbling excitedly in English about the trivia that are so engrossing. The teacher tries to shut the door on English sounds and speech patterns and for 40 minutes strives like a keen gardener to implant in the recalcitrant soil a few frail seedlings of speech patterns in the foreign language. Just as the seedlings are taking root and standing up for themselves, the bell goes and the class is dismissed into the English language environment. For the next 24 hours the pupils are swept along in a gale of English, responding to the rest of the day's lessons, reading specialist textbooks, jostling for a place in the dining room queue, surviving in the playground gang, shouting on the games field, gossiping on the bus going home, relaxing in front of the telly at night. Even in bed the English speech patterns shape the weird logic of dreamland. Next morning the foreign language teacher finds yesterday's tender seedlings of French or German, lying blighted and flattened by the gale of English. He gently waters them and revives them again. Just as he has restored them to the state they were in yesterday, the bell goes again and the gale of English sweeps in to destroy all, or nearly all, his handiwork.

Some comprehensive Heads have lately adopted the formula of 'blocking' the four weekly periods into two double periods of 70 or 80 minutes. By this method the teacher meets his class twice a week and in between the English language has free rein. Possibly the worst of all worlds, as the HMI report *Modern languages in comprehensive schools*[1] suggests.

Surely, a detached observer might ask in bewilderment, there must be a less wasteful way of teaching foreign languages? The essays by imaginative teachers assembled in this book describe various experiments whose common feature is an attempt to break out of this wasteful rhythm. Their initiative puts us all in their debt. The purpose of this paper is to examine something of the background to these experiments. At the outset we should avoid the danger of oversimplifying the issues involved. The analogy of the gardener tending his frail seedlings in a gale of English would only hold true if our limited objective, as foreign language teachers, were merely to teach our pupils to perform fluently in the foreign language. But suppose that we set ourselves other less easily measurable objectives for the secondary school foreign language experience. Suppose, for example, our main objective were to lay the foundations for learning at some later date a language not offered in school but required by our career or leisure interests, (Portuguese? Arabic? Italian? Swedish?). Would it then follow, if 'learning how to learn' a language were our chief objective, that the short, daily lesson was so uneconomical? We have no research evidence on this, but some learning theory suggests that the question is worth asking. And what if wisdom and judgment came into it as well as mere **cleverness**? Suppose that our chief objectives were to prepare, over several years, for the study visit abroad as a central educative experience (say) in the fourth form. Imagine a foreign language course whose main purpose was to make a comparative study of the way of life of two speech communities, at levels that fourth formers could verify **from their own experience.** Would the daily lesson be so wasteful if this was our purpose and if the actual getting of facility in using the foreign language **were deliberately postponed** until the time came to go abroad while being carefully prepared for in the classroom?

The contributors to this book, faced with such questions as these, would probably answer that their objectives do indeed include 'learning how to learn a language' and learning how to compare the pupil's familiar way of life with another that is different and challenging. They would see no contradiction between such classroom objectives and intensive 'immersion' as a necessary part of every pupil's apprenticeship in language study. Learning how to learn should perhaps necessarily include learning that intensive courses work.

There are other questions, however, raised by our analogy of the gardener and his frail seedlings. Do intensive courses work best (or only) with tough, resilient, motivated pupils of fair ability who do not give in easily? What about pupils who become bored unless the subject changes constantly? How does one cope with the alleged ten minute (maximum) attention span of many slower learners? What of the lack of interest of some parents which is reflected so infallibly in the children? We have a lot of evidence at university and polytechnic level (and in the private sector crash courses for business men) of the rapid learning of which clever, motivated students are capable. Reaching '0' level in Italian and German in two or three weeks, as in the enterprising experiments by Dr T Berger at the Language Teaching Centre, York, rightly aroused wide interest. The subjects, however, were highly selected and privileged university students. What of 'intensive' seed which falls on more stony ground or among the tares and weeds of the pop culture, with its rejection of hard work, and its worship of glitter and quick rewards?

Language teachers who contend every day with the worst patches of tares and weeds, especially in city schools, will rightly wish to raise such

8

questions. Theirs is a most ungrateful task. The foreign language is unique, among subjects in the curriculum, in that, no matter how the teacher defines his objectives in the classroom, both teacher and pupil are aware constantly that there exists a model of performance (the native speaker) who has acquired his skills by a process quite different from that followed by both pupil and most teachers. Assessment of success or failure is in the end a process of comparison with the native speaker. In no other subject is 'failure' so starkly apparent. 'Failure' in maths, history or biology is determined largely by the teacher, who sets up an arbitrary list of achievements considered by him to be appropriate for a given age group. No 'native-speaking' mathematician or historian ever walks into the Common Room. In the foreign language classroom, however, the native speaker is known to exist and the severe standard of native-speaking mastery limits the language teacher's freedom to prescribe, as his colleagues in other disciplines can do, the nature of the arbitrary tests by which 'failure'and 'success' are judged. It is harder to temper the foreign language wind to the shorn lambs.

As a consequence of the sheer difficulty of the discipline, language teachers down the ages have searched for more efficient ways of teaching their subject. No subject in the curriculum has accumulated such a literature devoted solely to methodology. 'Intensive' or 'immersion' methods are no new invention. Mackey[2] has pointed out that in Roman times immersion was the rule, when the prestigious foreign language, Greek, was learnt in the home by well-born Roman children in dialogue with an educated Greek (slave) tutor (who, having taught the children of the family, was rewarded on his retirement by the gift of Roman citizenship.)In Britain during the middle ages and after, Latin was frequently the sole medium of instruction in any formal education and was thus learnt by immersion. The renaissance, however, emphasised the value of classical Latin grammar as a model in place of the vulgar Latin which had become current. Coupled with the increasing use of the vernacular English in education this often led to grammar/translation as an ineffective method of teaching first Latin and later, by transference, other languages. Even Montaigne, who had early learnt to speak fluent Latin from a tutor, when he later went to the Jesuit College and had to learn his Latin grammar from the fathers, lost the facility to converse in Latin.

Though foreign language tuition in Tudor and Stuart England was largely confined to the wealthy who could afford the private tutor or the 'academy', in the grammar schools of the 16th and 17th centuries 'immersion' or 'intensive' methods of language teaching in schools were not unknown. Foster Watson in his unvaluable account of the origins of foreign language teaching in our schools tells of an example in making the foreign language the normal mode of communication both in and out of the classroom. In 1573 schoolboys at Southampton Grammar School, under Adrian à Saravia, (one of the many refugees from Europe who provided England with language teaching skills) acquired a sound knowledge of French because any use of English, even outside the classroom, was punished. 'He who spoke English, though only a sentence, was obliged to wear a fool's cap at meals.' The recalcitrants, we are told, stood aside and watched the rest eat. The motivating force of 'speak the foreign language or starve' must have been considerable.[3]

Another example of 'immersion' in the foreign language, in this case Latin, is found in the charter of King James Grammar School, Knaresborough, (West Yorkshire). At its foundation in 1637 it was laid down that after the first three years any boy caught using **English** in school or in the playground would be beaten by the Headmaster. None of the contributors to the present symposium goes as far as this in motivating forgetful or recalcitrant learners!

Such methods of motivating pupils to use their foreign language both in **and out** of class did not survive into the 18th and 19th centuries. The nearest approach to 'intensive' methods in the 19th century is probably the experiment by V Bétis, which was reported in a succession of numbers of the *Review of Reviews.* The editor, W T Stead, had written a laudatory article about Gouin's *L'art d'enseigner*[4] translated into English by V Bétis and H Swann in 1892. He was so impressed by Gouin's method that he proposed his own four children as 'guinea pigs'. The experiment carried out later in the same year is recounted in an invaluable paper by Gilbert:'...In brief, Bétis taught the two younger children - aged thirteen and nine - for one hour a day, and the two older children - aged eighteen and fifteen - for two hours a day. After six months they were subjected to a stringent examination by a committee of experts. Amongst many other tests they had to repeat in French a story they had just been told in French, to read an article from a French newspaper and repeat it in French, to explain and describe in French a series of pictures, to act as interpreters, and to repeat in French a conversation held by the persons present. In the general opinion of the committee they acquitted themselves extremely well in all these tests. Stead said that the system had taught his children to think in French; Pryde, a Headmaster, thought that they managed to establish a direct connection between idea and expression. Storr - editor of the *Journal of Education* - alone criticised the results, and suggested that this method was suitable only for small children - their vocabulary was limited and they could not, he felt sure, have translated from English into French.'[5]

Such willingness to experiment was typical of the 'great reform period' of 1880 to 1920. It was a period remarkable for the impact of a series of inspired teachers : François Gouin, Henry Sweet, Otto Jesperson and especially Von Glehn. This fearsome Cambridge schoolmaster, a pioneer of 'direct method' after changing his name to de Glehn at the time of the

First War, taught undergraduates taking the Cambridge Tripos in the 20s and 30s. Despite the need to conform to Tripos regulations he managed to make the weekly 'prose' class an adventure into the language.

The ferment of the 'great reform' did not last, however, and teachers settled back into a rut of grammar/translation in short daily lessons. There seem to have been two reasons for this loss of impetus after the great reforming period. First, conservatism was encouraged by the committee appointed by the Prime Minister, which under the chairmanship of Stanley Leathes reported in 1918, to some extent summing up the great reform as it had actually worked out in English classrooms. Leathes had few illusions : 'There is no royal road (in language method) no rule of thumb'...'If only six periods a week can be given to it, it is illusory to hope that children can be got to 'think in French'...Whatever method is used, grammatical accuracy must be required at every stage...'[6]

Direct methods as advocated so persuasively by Otto Jesperson and practised so magisterially by de Glehn, use of phonetics, regarded by Henry Sweet as the foundation of all technique in the classroom, trusting to the ear, not the eye as advocated by François Gouin, and the rejection by all of them of grammar/translation methods, this whole reform programme found little support from the committee which had looked at what was happening in the schools and did not like very much what it saw. Accuracy, and the ability of those pupils who went on to university to do 'proses', seemed to be suffering. Sanctions were called for and providentially the need was met by the setting up in 1918 of the new national system of (written) examinations, the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate (subjects to be taken at principal or subsidiary level) the whole arrangement to be overseen by the Secondary Schools Examination Council under its first chairman, William Temple.

Though motivated by the best of intentions, to save schools from the rapidly proliferating entrance examinations of the professional bodies and the colleges and universities, and though possibly beneficial in some areas of the curriculum, the new examinations had a stultifying effect on modern language teaching. They were almost entirely tests of written performance and the central prestigious test was the translation into the foreign language. This had an unfortunate backwash effect on teaching, for though a translation can be a searching test of the candidate's familiarity with the vocabulary and structures needed for translation of a given passage, it is certain that spending hours each week on such translations does less to extend the candidate's knowledge of the language than would the same time devoted to judicious reading, listening and dialogue. A precise 'dipstick', the prose measures accurately the oil that is present but it is doubtful whether repeated application of the dipstick ever added to the oil level. More appropriate as a regular classroom activity is 'quarrying', ie 'going to meet' the language as it is used by native speakers and writers and breaking off 'chunks' of it to be worked at, exploited, internalised by meaningful use.

Perhaps even more harmful was the method of assessing reading at the Higher level by prescribing four or five 'set books' on which questions were set to be answered in English. Candidates, unable to read a single paragraph of some of the texts without recourse to a dictionary, and lacking the barest knowledge of the period or of the society described in the book, and, more importantly, lacking any acquaintance with books of similar style or content in their own language, were encouraged to make insincere essays in literary criticism, borrowing freely from the critical writings of the pundits like Lanson and Faguet, with whom they were often more familiar than with the authors of the set books themselves. The whole exercise was dangerously like a schooling in hypocrisy.

The new examination system both took initiative away from the schools and devalued the active, oral use of the language in the classroom. There were brave individual attempts by teachers to experiment with new methods in the 20s and 30s but the whole concept of schooling during the period was elitist. Education was thought of as being as much a selective process as a preparation for living a full life. So long as the few bright scholars emerged or the requisite number of teachers graduated it seemed not to be anybody's responsibility to ask what kind of foreign language education the vast majority of children were getting.

No doubt the historian of the education of the inter-war years will find other reasons to add to these to explain why comparatively little came of the great reform after 1918. The fact is that there was comparatively little change in classroom methods for nearly half a century. The influential report of the Annan committee in 1962 probably did more than any other single event to initiate reform.[7] The committee had gone (sensibly) outside its brief and among other initiatives pressed an unwilling SSEC to authorise experiment with the GCE 'O' level papers (which had replaced the School Certificate in 1949 while retaining the prose translation). It was not until 1964 that the Associated Examining Board got permission from SSEC, despite the opposition of the university representative on the modern language panel, to offer candidates the option of an alternative to the prose.

It happened that this development coincided with the arrival from France and from the USA of some exciting new audio-visual and audio-lingual course materials and with the discovery by the schools of the tape-recorder. These developments greatly encouraged by initiatives from the Nuffield Foundation, the Schools Council and others, which there is no space to catalogue here, opened the floodgates and an exciting decade of innovation followed.

Already, however, the climate had been prepared for fresh thinking about language teaching by the wartime 'crash' courses (especially in Russian) offered to servicemen. Both in Britain and the USA a great leap forward was made in perfecting techniques for teaching specific language skills. In Britain the experiments were abruptly ended with the ending of National Service in 1959. In the USA the courses continued however. Their success owed much to motivation. One had only to witness young American officers on draft for Vietnam, sweating, shirt-sleeved in a stifling language laboratory in the Washington services language centre, having been given five weeks in which to master the tones of Vietnamese, to appreciate how much motivation can achieve, even such frankly instrumental motivation. For these young men a pass in the Vietnamese language test might mean the difference between a posting to a front line fighting unit and a much safer interpreter's job back at base. Adrian à Saravia would have understood such motivation!

The perfecting of the tape-recorder and developing expertise in using it gave a considerable impetus to the attempts that began in schools, already in the 60s (under Miss Howe for instance in Hertfordshire) to apply intensive techniques in schools. The recorder has been imaginatively used in most of the experiments described in this symposium (*cf* for example the use made of cassette recordings at Archbishop Michael Ramsey School, Chapter 7). Now for the first time the teacher who wishes to 'immerse' his pupils in the language, has a splendid instrument at his disposal.

Now experiments in immersion are reported from schools of all kinds and it is to be hoped that the publication of this volume will encourage further experimentation. Trial and error rather than theorising, is likely to prove the better way forward. Are there any guidelines or working rules, however, that theory can suggest as to the directions that trial and error should best follow?

I think there may be three questions to ask which can help to make for clear thinking about objectives and methods in intensive teaching.

The first question is the one we raised at the beginning of this essay, namely, what are we aiming to achieve? Do we include among our objectives the development in our pupils, through foreign language learning, of some better understanding of how language works, as well as the beginnings of wisdom - not merely cleverness? Is it an important aim of language teaching to develop the capacity to make a just comparison between a culture one has grown up in and a different, challenging complex of values (a capacity which, one would think, cries out to find a place in the curriculum in, say, Belfast schools)? If these are among our aims, then our intensive experiments must give them due place. Teachers will not be content simply to achieve success in fluency of repartee. Learning how language works, getting insight into patterns of speech and patterns of meaning will have an important place, as well as the patient and perhaps necessarily slow cultivation of contrastive studies, culminating in deliberate comparisons, carried out on carefully planned study visits abroad, between precise aspects of the known parochial and the foreign culture. Such comparisons, of course, set out to challenge growing judgment. They will not be helped if the teacher of French only selects French examples of transatlantic pulp/pop commonplaces with the mistaken aim of ingratiating his subject with the leaders on the disco scene. Here the nature of the examinations is all important in determining teachers' priorities. If intensive teaching becomes the rule in foreign language classrooms it will be important to ensure that foreign language **testing** does not sacrifice educative objectives to mere instruction. This caution is especially necessary regarding the growth of graded tests (at thirteen plus and fourteen plus) for the slower learner, useful though these may prove.

Nevertheless it is a proper aim to make language learning more efficient and my second question concerns this aim. I want to ask what exactly it is that makes intensive teaching more effective than traditional methods. We can, I think, get some insight into the acquisition of L2 in school by comparing it with the baby's acquisition of L1.

There are many important differences between the two processes but one is crucial. During the acquisition of the mother tongue every speech act, every new acquisition, every new act of comprehension by the baby is an act of performance : a play with the curtain up and the audience in their seats. Each linguistic step forward is motivated. Language is used to satisfy a need. By contrast, in the foreign language classroom, very few speech acts satisfy a real need. They are mere rehearsals, against the day, which for many pupils must seem very distant, when the language will be really needed and when we cannot drop the pretence and break into English. Some pupils (notably girls, and pupils from encouraging homes) will accept endless rehearsal and make-believe in the classroom. Others, especially boys and pupils from unencouraging homes, where insecurity narrows horizons and deters long-term planning, soon grow tired of rehearsal.

The process is quite different if the foreign language is acquired in the foreign country, as it is by the immigrant child, or by the pupil when he goes on his study visit abroad. Then the process is true performance, and it resembles L1 acquisition much more closely. This may explain why for the most part the pupils from our grammar school élites who used to become fluent in their foreign language were those who went abroad and performed instead of endlessly rehearsing in situations where no real need was satisfied by use of the foreign language.

A fair question then to ask of intensive or immersion courses such as this collection describes, is to what extent they succeed in substituting performance for rehearsal. Of course the intensive course prevents the continual interference of English between foreign language sessions and facilitates frequent recapitulation and reinforcement of what is learned. But is it necessarily any the less rehearsal. How real is the compulsion to use the language to satisfy present needs? Are the speech acts true performance? Is the pupil who resents endless rehearsal going to be motivated not to give up, or will only the élites survive as they always did, to go abroad, to learn, as L1 was learnt, by performance?

In choosing materials and activities for use on intensive courses this distinction between real (motivated) performance in the foreign language and merely uninterrupted intensive rehearsal may offer a useful guide.

My third question concerns pupils' expectations. The role of expectation in learning is becoming well known. Learners do not, in fact, learn what teachers set out to teach them. They take away from each lesson an amalgam of what their teachers aim to teach and what they come to the lesson expecting to learn. This is fundamental to any theory of instruction. It is not something to rail against, or regret. In foreign language learning, without the precious learning tool, which Oller has called the grammar of expectancy, we can expect very little true learning to take place. But it has important consequences for the language teacher.

Oller's researches in cloze testing have shown that it is the learner's developing ability to guess what is coming, from the linguistic evidence available that makes rapid comprehension possible. The grammar of expectancy also interacts with the short term memory. The more the learner can process the incoming language by matching strings of it with expected patterns, the more 'bits' of the message he can hold in his STM store. Oller describes the interaction between STM and grammar expectancy in these terms:

> 'Consider a model of the language processing mechanism which incorporates short-term memory constraints. If short-term memory is vaguely like a tape loop which has a constant rate of fade-out, the only way that efficiency for storing elements on that tape loop can be enhanced is to somehow get them onto the loop faster. One way of accomplishing this is to store elements in larger chunks. If a small chunk can be stored as easily as a large one, as has been suggested by Miller[8] the amount of information stored at any given time is dependent upon the richness or impoverishedness of each of the chunks stored. One way of enriching the amount of information in each chunk is by

> the utilisation of a hierarchically structured grammar of expectancy. By dealing with chunks of sequences the rapidity with which units can be processed is significantly enhanced without changing the number of superordinate chunks in short term memory at any given time.'[9]

Oller's conclusions from cloze testing research are supported by evidence from aptitude testing. The 'Swedish grammar test' of aptitude devised by P S Green and described in his account of the York three year study, predicted better than any other measure of aptitude the relative success of 100 eleven year olds learning German under grammar school conditions. The test was in effect a measure of speed in perceiving quite simple, even superficial, patterns in (written) language, and in creating new bits to fit the patterns. It measured the pupils' quickness at processing new bits of language and at acquiring Oller's grammar of expectancy.[10]

It seems to follow from evidence from these two areas of research that our teaching techniques ought to aim to help our pupils to learn to acquire a grammar of expectancy. If some of them are slower at this than others we ought to be looking for ways of helping them by drawing their attention to patterns which more fortunate learners perceive unaided, by colour codes, substitution tables, transformation games, internal translation etc. Such training in perceiving pattern and forming appropriate expectations is rehearsal not performance of course, and will not by itself bring mastery of the foreign language. It is the kind of rehearsal, however, that many pupils need before they launch into the rapid acquisition, by performance, that the foreign country or the immersion course provide. Both elements seem to be necessary. The truth may be that while it is only in performance (or near performance) activities that the learner makes progress in language mastery, which is why the teacher must provide as many of these as possible and in great variety, yet rapid learning in performance sessions is facilitated by the sessions which strengthen insight into pattern and which set up expectations. There seems to be a place for both and the teacher's task is a nice exercise in judgement for only he, or she, can know the pupils and their expectations and needs.

To sum up: I am arguing the need for a great deal more experimentation in the wake of the innovations described by the contributors to this volume. It is vital that the experiments be conducted in schools, by practising schoolteachers. Intensive experiments in universitites or polytechnics, or in aseptic laboratory conditions, are not difficult to stage but they are of limited interest. The real pioneers are the teachers who manage to solve the timetabling problems, to overcome the prejudices and fears of colleagues, to persuade Heads, parents, unimaginative LEAs, that the thing can be done.

If experiments in intensive teaching are to become widespread, however, I suggest that we need to give more, not less, attention both to defining our objectives and to choice of classroom methods and materials.

Regarding objectives we should not lose sight of the importance of our pupils' understanding something of how language works, how languages differ, what knowing a language can mean and, above all, the value of learning, from the school experience, both techniques for learning how to learn the particular language that they find they need later in adult life, plus the zest and confidence to do so.

Secondly, our aims ought to include some attempt to teach judgment through a sympathetic study of the foreign speech community, and the recognition that its values are different, even challenging. It is by drawing education from the challenge (expecially through the well-planned study visit) not by glossing over the differences and concentrating on commonplaces shared by the trans-national pop culture, that powers of just comparison, weighing evidence and so the beginnings of wisdom may be strengthened.

As for methods, there seem to be two guidelines. The first is to keep in mind the difference between performance in the foreign language and rehearsal. The second is to learn from the accumulating research evidence, the importance of setting up appropriate expectations at each successive stage of the learning process, and of choosing classroom techniques which strengthen insight into pattern in language.

References

1 Department of Education and Science *Modern languages in comprehensive schools* HMSO, 1977.
2 Mackey, William Francis *Language teaching analysis* Longmans, 1965.
3 Watson, Foster *Beginnings of the teaching of modern subjects in England* Pitman, 1909. p. 396.
4 Gouin, F *L'art d'enseigner* Philip, 1880 (English translation 1892).
5 Gilbert, M Origins of the reform movement in modern language teaching *Research Review* 4, 5 and 6 (article in three parts) 1953-55.
6 Cd 9036 *Report of the committee appointed by the Prime Minister to enquire into the position of modern languages in the educational system of Great Britain* HMSO, 1918. pp. 53-4.
7 Annan Report *The teaching of Russian: report of the committee appointed by the Ministry of Education and Secretary of State for Scotland in September 1960* HMSO, 1962.
8 Miller, G A *The psychology of communication* Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1968.
9 Oller, J W Cloze tests of second language proficiency and what they measure *Proceedings of Aila Congress,* Copenhagen, 1972.
10 Green P S *The language laboratory in school* Oliver & Boyd, 1975.

2. The Goethe Gymnasium, Frankfurt

H Fischer-Wollpert

Aims

The principal aim of foreign language teaching in the 19th and early 20th centuries was to enable pupils to read and understand literature, for this would provide the only contact with foreign nations which most young people could expect in later life. Language teachers hoped that the mind, character and attitudes of a people would thus be understood through reading its literature.

In our own times, this situation has completely changed and it is no longer only a vague hope for young people that they may make direct, personal and continued contact with foreigners. Of course, even in former times, pupils had learned enough spoken language to order a cup of tea or a glass of beer when abroad, but that is hardly adequate for the wider opportunites now open to them. If ordinary people - not only the selected few - are to travel and live with friends abroad, they must be able to converse and discuss their own views in a foreign language. True and unprejudiced understanding is not likely unless there is this direct contact, which only knowledge of the language can give.

We have not yet done enough to provide for this: to give our pupils sufficient for full insight into the surrounding world or indeed to permit international understanding. Certain privileged children may, through their education at international, multilingual (and expensive) schools, experience life in an international community and be taught through the medium of a foreign language by native-speaking teachers having a background of their own tradition and viewpoint. But we as teachers of modern languages have a responsibility to children of ordinary families: they too should have opportunities to widen their horizons where their parents cannot provide them.

Thus, some German state grammar schools have set up *sections bilingues*,some using French and some using English as the medium of teaching. In the Goethe Gymnasium at Frankfurt we introduced a *section bilingue*, using English for certain subjects, in 1967.

It is true that teaching selected subjects in a foreign language never produced quite the same results as living and learning entirely in a foreign country, but we have found that the intensive language teaching of a *section bilingue* effectively prepares pupils to develop and maintain continuous direct contact with a foreign nation.

For German and other non-English speaking pupils there is an additional value in bilingual education. More and more students at universities, other than those specialising in language and literature, need a really thorough knowledge of English. Much necessary reference material in science, politics, sociology and economics is written in English and students must be able to scan it quickly in the original language - if only to decide how helpful it will be in their work. And after completing their studies, scientists, sociologists and others must keep up with their disciplines through further reading and discussion.

Problems and solutions

With such aims in mind we did not think our first responsibility was to pupils who would specialise in languages - they would in any case receive sufficient training. Rather, intensive language teaching seemed essential for those who would not be trained as language specialists, but who might well go into business or administration without any further training. This had important consequences for our choice of materials: rather than concentrating on the study and criticism of literary texts, such pupils needed to understand present day political, social and economic problems of a foreign country in an historical context, and to acquire the vocabulary necessary to discuss these.

The best method seemed to be to use the foreign language as the medium for teaching one or two subjects. As economics is not taught in many German grammar schools, those which established *sections bilingues* mostly chose history and civics or geography for this purpose. At first we planned to include an experimental course in science and mathematics, but we had to abandon this idea because of the difference between science teaching in Britain and in Germany, which is so great that we could not find a suitable teacher. Moreover, the advantages of teaching science or mathematics through a foreign language were not very great - an auxiliary course, lasting one term, is a sufficient basis for pupils to acquire the necessary vocabulary on their own, if required.

Although improving pupils' fluency and vocabulary is important, it was not the principal aim. Intensive teaching of a foreign language is worthwhile only if the pupil succeeds in understanding contemporary aspects of the foreign country and is motivated to continue such studies after leaving school. This cannot be achieved only through reading - even when the material is relevant. Courses must be taught by a foreign teacher, one who grew up and was educated in the country concerned, and who can speak from his own personal experience. A good language teacher who is not a native speaker can probably teach the language just as well as a native speaker, but he sees problems and solutions from the same national viewpoint as his pupils and thus cannot broaden their views adequately for life in a multinational community. Nor can foreign assistants or students, attached to a school for one year during their studies, do so - although such exchanges are excellent for their limited purpose - because they are not full members of staff, their stay is too short and they are not fully trained teachers. The success of *sections bilingues* depends on the initiative of fully qualified teachers and above all on their personality.

It is very difficult to find teachers for such pioneering work. German schools with French *sections bilingues* receive valuable help from the French government, which begins by finding suitable teachers and does not end by providing teaching materials and financial aid. But unfortunately, any real help for English *sections* was not available to us through official and semi-official British channels. Indeed, without generous assistance from friends at the University of York we should have been in trouble. But these gave their time, advertised the post, screened the applicants and advised us during the final selection interviews. It would be very helpful if Britain could assist through official agencies so that we should not be dependent on the goodwill and generosity of personal friends.

Teachers for *sections bilingues* need not be particularly well acquainted with the education system in which they are going to work. We found that foreign teachers settled in well with help from our own staff. But their past experience in their *own* system is very valuable. Our first English teacher of history at the Goethe Gymnasium found ways of integrating new courses into our system and acquired a natural authority and influence over her pupils. After these initial years, even a young and inexperienced teacher performed very well. Nor is it necessary, or even desirable, to speak the pupils' mother tongue well. The requirement for pupils to speak English because their teacher does not understand enough German seems psychologically natural and avoids the artificiality of speaking a foreign language to a compatriot.

Not every child who needs (or wants) to learn a foreign language can work in a *section bilingue*. We had to start them early and the problem was to select candidates before they had learned a foreign language. At the Goethe Gymnasium we invited the parents of all pupils who entered the school at ten or eleven to meet us and then explained the idea of the *section bilingue*. We stressed that it would mean much additional work, but nevertheless every year a large majority of parents wished their children to have this special opportunity. We have the impression that in this, practical gain was not their prime motive, but rather the chance of developing their children's understanding through some experience of international education.

As we always had too many applicants, we tried two methods of selection. First, on entry to the school, applicants took three or four tests of aptitude, administered by a psychologist. These tests were not based on previous foreign language knowledge. Aware that this was only a rough filter, we also wished to correct any wrong decisions during the first two years of school for children who then proved their ability in normal work. So, secondly, for the first eighteen months *all* applicants were given the opportunity of intensive language training by the addition of two periods a week to their normal foreign language timetable. After eighteen months, final selection was based on this work. Those considered unlikely to work successfully in a *section bilingue* were then taught like all the rest of the same group.

Such a method clearly enabled us to take justifiable decisions, but we could not often use it because we had not the resources for extra teaching over so long a period. Moreover, initial selection by testing was found to give reasonably good results if we provided for able pupils to be admitted later, and gave them opportunities to reach the standard required.

Organisation

Organisation of our bilingual work was based on dividing the whole span of nine years into three equal periods. By increasing normal English lessons during the first three years, we intended to lay the foundations for the teaching of history by an English teacher during the next three years. During the last three years (leading up to the *Abitur*) most pupils continued history in English, although some had to give it up to concentrate on other subjects.

During the first three years, two extra periods a week were taught by a German teacher of English. This aimed to provide pupils with extra written and oral exercises (including language laboratory work) rather than to cover more ground more quickly. Much stress was laid on oral work and on reading 'unseen' texts. A German teacher was found best for this work because of his insight into the specific difficulties of beginners. In the last semester of the period the foreign teacher sometimes partly took over so as to facilitate transition to the following year.

At the beginning of the second three-year period, English teachers of history had to be very careful not to discourage pupils. Beginning with teaching about individual historical characters, supported by suitable anecdotes and decriptions of life in the past, only slowly and in the later years could they move to the analysis of driving forces and ideas, at a level appropriate to the age group. Initial difficulties by pupils in understanding and using English and working with a foreign teacher were quite quickly overcome, and by the end of this decisive second period (at a standard roughly comparable with 'O' level) pupils could use material not specially prepared for foreign learners.

The last three years are the crowning period. There is more freedom of choice for pupils and teachers: historical movements and developments vital in the foreign country can be compared with circumstances in Germany at the same time; comparative reactions can be studied and explained. The new concept of work leading to the *Abitur* now current in the Federal Republic *(Reformierte Oberstufe)* is expecially favourable to this approach. Methods are similar to those used when history is studied in the mother tongue. Pupils must read background material in English on their own without help. They must produce summaries for their group. Each must write an extended essay on an approved topic chosen by himself. Written, and in some cases oral, examinations in history are done in English.

During the second period the main problem was to provide teaching material. History text books designed for English schools could not be used unaltered, not so much because they assumed a prior knowledge of facts unknown to the foreign pupil, but because of their style of presentation. Books in easy language are designed for younger children and are too childlike for our thirteen and fourteen year olds. But those written in Britain for this age group have too complex a vocabulary and are often too abstract in style. By the end of period two, this difficulty no longer exists and normal English books are used. But for the first one or two years the teacher mostly has to compile or write his own material, which is stencilled for pupils to review at home. The time and trouble thus required of the teacher needs no emphasis.

The course content in period two was not very controversial. Clearly it could be neither German history in such depth as for the others nor English history in any great detail. It had to be something like European history. To overcome the objection that pupils did not learn enough German history, we asked a German history teacher to take one extra period on German history, in close cooperation with his English colleague.

We cannot of course offer the greatest advantage of international schools: that is to provide the experience of life in an international community. Our pupils must be content with exchanges with English families or boarding schools. Such exchanges are virtually indispensable. One lasting about three weeks - as many English and German schools arrange - is not long enough. We required a whole term. Formerly exchanges at age sixteen or seventeen were preferred, but we have found one at about thirteen, is more helpful, with fewer problems. Participation has to be voluntary, but in fact only a few do not take part. We sent small groups to different partner schools and welcomed their own pupils in exchange. Pupils followed the normal life and work in the partner school for a term. Though they missed some of the material learned by their classmates, not a single exchange pupil had to repeat a year or was handicapped for long. All reached the standard required in their form within a few weeks, when given some extra time and help by teachers of other subjects. It is not easy to find schools which favour such exchanges, especially as a normal routine. We found that when, for particular reasons, English parents did not want their children to spend the full term abroad, it was always possible to work on an exchange basis for three weeks and then prolong the stay of the German pupil as a paying guest in the same family, or in another one if accommodation and circumstances did not permit. A direct exchange between families should be the normal aim, however, since both sides are then personally involved, but we must be careful to ensure that no pupil is denied an exchange because of his parents' socio-economic situation.

It was important that provision should be made for pupils who had failed the *section bilingue* entrance test, but who, nevertheless, within two or three years had shown their ability to participate. Although relatively rare, such provision applies to children who may have difficulties in adjusting to a new school. If they wish to join a *section bilingue* after the first two years, individual help, possibly by a term's exchange, can make the change possible. And if in exceptional cases they can be helped to reach the necessary language competence, they can be admitted even in the fourth or fifth years.

More often the opposite happens: those who begin well cannot keep up.Teachers must be aware of the danger of expecting too much extra work from children, who should not specialise too early, and thereby prejudice their progress in other subjects. It is important that what is regarded as an extra opportunity should not be the cause of overall failure in school.

While the future profit arising from bilingual education is not difficult to explain to parents and pupils, its short-term reward is more difficult to justify. Formerly this was less so, since the regulations for the *Abitur* were flexible enough to permit really demanding work and a note could be attached to the certificate explaining what had been done. This secured immediate advantages for university entrance applicants. Lately, however, the position has changed. The *numerus clausus*, which restricts university admissions in many subjects, is based on the average marks across the whole *Abitur* certificate; admission is determined therefore by computer and a difference in a decimal place of the average mark may disqualify for admission to an intended course. Under such conditions, deplorable from the educational point of view, parents hesitate to advise their children to undertake more demanding work in one subject if this might mean obtaining a lower mark in another. Reform is urgently needed but at present this system endangers freer work which all concerned acknowledge to be of value.

The same is true of the International Baccalaureate. This examination would be ideal and for some years our bilingual pupils took it voluntarily in addition to their *Abitur.* But who can advise work for a broader aim, rather than a concentration on marks in a limited field, when university admission depends *only* on marks? This danger does not exist in those countries where university selection includes a personal interview, since the school can then explain what was done in a *section bilingue* in an attachment to the school leaving certificate. Credit can then be given for this work and its potentiality.

Requirements

The establishment of a *section bilingue* depends largely on the initiative of a particular school. But besides initial approval by parents and pupils, staff and Heads must remember that continuous problems will arise which may require the support of outside administrative bodies. Certain conditions seem necessary from the start:

(a) Provision must be made for the salary of the foreign teacher. This may not be very great if an exchange can be arranged, but such teachers cannot be secured within the existing system of one-year *student* exchanges. Teachers must be ready to work abroad for at least two years, be fully qualified and have had some previous experience.

(b) Continuity must be ensured. Not only must a teacher stay for two years, but a successor must be provided for.

(c) The expense of additional equipment may not be great but there must be adequate books for reference and study as well as some foreign newspapers.

(d) Some financial help should be available to those parents unable to meet the costs of their children's exchanges.

(e) Short additional courses (of two or three months) should be available for children who run into temporary difficulties of keeping up with bilingual groups.

(f) Teachers of *sections bilingues* should be enabled to meet their colleagues who are doing similar work in other schools so as to exchange views and solve problems.

Although too early to make a final appreciation of results so far achieved, we have found that the support of parents and children has not diminished but rather increased, in spite of the difficulties caused by the restrictions on university entrance. We have not sought to make our pupils bilingual to the extent which only permanent residence abroad can achieve, but merely to give them a real basis for life in a multinational community, equipped with wider views and fewer parochial prejudices. At first we thought using a foreign medium might make the content of subjects taught rather superficial, but results in the International Baccalaureate and the impressions of many visitors dispersed our fears. It was a considerable consolation when our first English history teacher, after some years, said 'I would not teach my forms at home any differently.'

3. Mill Hill School

William Winfield

Mill Hill is an independent school with approximately 480 boys, of whom about two-thirds board. Over half arrive at thirteen plus from local preparatory schools, but an increasing number come from abroad: currently over thirty different countries are represented. In addition, twenty boys, often from primary or comprehensive schools, join at twelve plus. French is a core subject to '0' level, German an option taken by about half the annual entry. The inevitable variety of educational backgrounds (standards in the first year in French, for example, range from the absolute beginner to the scholar already capable of passing '0' level well) necessitates a certain flexibility of approach. The intellectual range is similarly varied: not everyone is necessarily an academic star.

The modern languages department has consistently tried to maintain an imaginative approach to its work. As well as more conventional material (course books and readers), teaching by direct method using French and German textbooks together with exploitation of audio-visual courses, the language laboratory and BBC broadcasts have provided the staple fare for the past ten years. Previous directors of the department have included the present Staff Inspector for modern languages, Mr M R Wigram, and the late Michael Brown, with whom I was privileged to work for five years before his tragically premature death in 1975. It was an eventful period spent in setting up the *section bilingue,* an experiment which has become a lasting testimonial to Michael's imagination and foresight.

It is of course intensely ironic that Britain's adhesion to the EEC should coincide with a period of apparent national disillusion with the teaching of modern languages and a critical decline in the number of those studying languages beyond '0' level. It is as though, having finally arrived in Brussels, the average Englishman has decided to fall back yet again on his indigenous laziness in expecting all foreigners to speak his language, a linguistic *superbe isolement* characterised by the view that the mastery of a foreign tongue is an embarrassment, an academic gift reserved for specialists which is irrelevant to normal life and work.

Before we condemn the average Englishman too severely, however, should we not first look critically at how we, as modern languages teachers, are motivating our charges? In an extreme case, five years of toil leads to a presumed ability to translate a few sentences about trains from Birmingham and Crewe, dirty factories and yellow canals, as a recent '0' level French prose translation will testify. The relevance of such an exercise to the majority of pupils' future needs is questionable; the degree of enthusiasm and enjoyment engendered by the preparation for such an examination is, to my mind, negligible. A language is above all a means of communication; it follows therefore that it should be considered as a tool of secondary importance to that which has to be communicated. Our traditional methods of teaching languages have tended to emphasise the learning of the language as an end in itself, producing a situation in which it can be said, without too much exaggeration, that our linguists are people who know how to speak a foreign language without having anything particular they need to say in it. The aim of our experiment at Mill Hill is to inject motivation into language learning by giving our pupils something significant to say. We attempt to achieve this by teaching geography and history through the medium of French. The foreign language is taken for granted as the vehicle of communication and thereby ceases to be a subject in its own right.

At present we have two groups of boys affected by the scheme. In the first instance, since we lacked experience and wished to give the experiment as firm a footing as possible, we thought it advisable to attempt *section bilingue* work with only those most capable linguistically. Since the scheme's inception in 1972, therefore, the first group, some 24 boys aged thirteen, have been chosen during the course for their first year at Mill Hill on the basis of their ability in French. They are prepared in class for a two-year course to 'O' level, using Grayson's *A la page* Books 2 and 3, a wide variety of readers including the useful Longman series (including *Voyage à Paris*) and BBC schools broadcasts. In addition they are given a weekly oral session in small groups by an enthusiastic native French speaker.

In 1974, the confidence and experience acquired with this first group led us to widen the scheme. We believed that it was important that we should try to show that the experiment could be successfully tackled by pupils not necessarily in the top French set. Thus, a second group, represented by one of the geography sets in which competence in French covers almost the whole spread of ability within the school, is also given conversation classes in its first year. The majority of these boys are prepared in class for a three-year course to '0' level, using either Grayson or *Longman Audio-visual French. Stages A2 - A4*, depending on ability and setting. Technical problems in the timetabling of options preclude us offering the course to every volunteer. Conversely boys can opt out of the scheme at the end of their first year, although this has happened only once to date.

By the beginning of their second year, both groups are sufficiently competent orally to spend two 45-minute periods a week (supplementary to their normal French periods) on geography courses which are taught entirely in French. It had always been felt that basically descriptive subjects like geography and history would lend themselves most readily to our experiment. Of the two, geography was considered the more manageable at an early stage: most of the discussion can be conducted in the present tense and concepts can be conveniently explained by pictorial stimuli such as maps, graphs, rock samples and so on.

The geography course for the first group is loosely based on the syllabus for the *Troisième* in French schools. We use the *manuel* published by Bordas, a superbly illustrated book with a minimum of fearsome printed text, together with the accompanying *Cahier de travaux pratiques,* a work-book requiring the pupil to complete maps and graphs and to identify photographs and other materials. Our course concentrates firstly on one particular physical feature of a number of regions of France, for example, the Massif Central volcanoes or glaciers in the Alps. Later the course focusses upon more difficult human and economic aspects: population, land use, communications and industry.

As it happened, since before we started the experiment, Mill Hill had been closely linked with a Catholic *école subventionnée* in Rouen, the Institution Join-Lambert. One of the various features of the link is the regular simultaneous exchange of a whole class of fourteen year olds in March for a period of three to four weeks. The 1973 party was the first to have studied geography in French. It had been felt that a field course in France would be a high point of any geography teaching. Despite all the modern aids of overhead projectors, colour sides and the rest, what more direct means can there be of making a pupil aware of the relevance of his subject than a lesson *in situ?* We decided therefore to use the opportunity afforded by the Rouen exchange to add a two-day field course devoted to a general survey of [illegible] Normandie. Our link with Rouen was well placed, for the area [illegible] one of the most concentrated examples in France of future economic development based on a privileged geographical situation.

A number of factors had to be considered in first preparing the field course. Since then the formula has been successfully repeated each year with minor modifications. Most important, without the support of our colleagues in Rouen, the planning and execution of the course was impossible. Fortunately, we could count on the full backing of M le Supérieur, the then Headmaster of Join-Lambert, and of the English and geography departments. Early on M Bernard Legay, *professeur de géographie*, became actively involved. Intimately acquainted with the region, he drew up the original itinerary and has since acted as course leader each year. The expertise and professional participation of such a colleague is fundamental to any project of this kind.

A second consideration concerned the level of competence of the boys involved. The promising results of their two terms of geography in French allowed us to assume that they would be able to cope linguistically, but we were uncertain whether their geographical knowledge was sufficiently developed to cope with a fairly technical regional survey, since the majority had not studied any other geography. It was decided that M Legay should give a number of preparatory lessons each year whilst the boys are at school in Rouen. He explains briefly why the area's geographical features give it immense resources for future development. The role of the Seine is demonstrated, an analysis is made of a typical Norman commune and the group is shown how to extract information from a large-scale map of the Institut Géographique National.

For the field course we hire a small coach. The itinerary totals some 350 kilometres. In two days a large number of tasks are carried out. A farm in the *pays de Caux* is visited, the Seine Valley near Villequier is sketched in profile and industrial development noted, the port and installations at Le Havre are visited, samples of soil are analysed, active and passive cliff faces at Etretat are examined, the petrol terminal at Antifer is seen. Previous to their field course, the boys have been measuring rainfall and drawing up temperature graphs for the period of their exchange visit. (The list of activities is quoted in detail simply to stress that this is a serious attempt to evaluate a region geographically and not a touristic bird's eye view *à la Michelin*.)

Once back in England, each boy is expected to produce a dossier on Haute-Normandie by the end of the Easter holiday. An outline structure is provided since by this time they have almost too much information and we want the boys to resist the temptation merely to catalogue a boring series of facts. The basis of the dossier is to explain why *La Haute-Normandie est une région en pleine expansion*. Results vary from twenty to 40 sides of material. The majority of dossiers are highly organised, well illustrated assessments of the physical, human and economic structure of the region. The best are sent to be marked by the geography department in Rouen and prizes are awarded. The evaluation by the French geographers is a significant part of the exercise in that it emphasises to the boys that they have successfully communicated to French specialists a topic of some complexity in the French language. The final proof of the effectiveness of such a field course in France comes on their return to England in the way the boys show themselves adept at handling quite advanced topics in class. The somewhat elementary accounts of the formation of a glacier with which they started their geography course now give way to discussion of some competence on, for example, *les problèmes de l'exode rural*.

Having taken '0' level French in the summer term, the first group begin to prepare for the bulk of their '0' level examinations in their third year. In place of geography, they now study history in French. By arrangement with the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board the boys take in English the normal paper on 20th century Europe. They prepare 19th century Europe through the medium of French. We use the textbook *Histoire en troisième* published by Nathan. This particular edition was chosen because the accompanying *Cahier de travaux pratiques* is thought to be particularly appropriate to our purposes. The sheets are used as test papers worked by the candidates at regular intervals; the marks are submitted to the examiners and, subject to monitoring, count towards the total marks for the examination. Other regular test marks awarded throughout the year are also accepted by the examiners up to 50 per cent of the total marks. The balance is awarded on a formal question paper set by the examiners on the basis of the syllabus. The French element as a whole represents approximately 50 per cant of the total '0' level history marks. The syllabus covers France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Russia and Great Britain from 1815 to 1914 and offers a unique opportunity of seeing the period through French eyes. Waterloo becomes a major catastrophe and England an interfering busybody when 'we, the French', are engaged upon legitimate colonial conquest in Africa.

It can be confidently asserted that comprehension as such, as far as the language is concerned, has ceased to be a problem. Although history imposes greater demands upon the pupils' ability to express their ideas, the use of French is taken entirely for granted and no one is tempted to lapse into English even in moments of stress. The boys make their own revision notes from reference books and class discussion. Formal written work poses more of a problem. It is unrealistic to expect the class in the time available to produce full-scale French essays on historical questions. Short answers on the lines demanded in the *Cahier de travaux pratiques* are all that is being looked for in terms of the examination. The format is not unlike recent trends in history '0' level where original documents are set for commentary.

In their French lessons all these boys begin to prepare for an 'A' level in French in two years' time. Those who choose to study French as a main subject in the sixth form will join the regular French 'A' level groups. The others will, whatever their chosen three subjects, sit the French 'A' level of the Associated Examining Board after one year in the sixth form, using three of their subsidiary periods. If they wish, they may continue with their French in the upper sixth on the basis of a post-'A' level subsidiary subject. Here we provide a varied programme of reading, discussion and listening to topical BBC and French radio broadcasts with the aim of keeping active the high level of French by then acquired.

We have chosen the 'A' level course of the AEB for two main reasons. The board offers a high proportion of marks for the oral examination, a feature which we very much welcome. In addition, the literature paper demands the preparation of a topic, often of a geographical or historical nature. Recently, we have been preparing 'Provence' and have found that after their work on the Haute-Normandie survey, the boys have managed the work quite easily and have also found it both interesting and relevant. The policy of the board is also to set one or two of its literature texts with reference to the topics. Again we have found that the boys particularly appreciated Pagnol's *Le château de ma mère* for both its descriptions of the *provençal* countryside and its period flavour, which they can compare with the futuristic atmosphere of Fos.

The second, smaller group of boys of unstreamed French ability study only geography, but prepare that subject as part of their '0' level. With the kind cooperation of the Oxford and Cambridge Board again, one of the two papers is examined in French. The syllabus is based on the Bordas textbooks for the *troisième* and *quatrième* and covers aspects of France, western Europe and the Soviet Union. Although it is administratively impossible to send these boys on exchange to France during term-time, a field study is carried out as an integral part of the course in Normandy during the summer holidays. Half the set at a time spends a week camping in and studying the area with the help of Mill Hill teachers. On return to England, every boy undertakes a 3,000 word project which is marked by us, moderated by the board's examiner and which counts for 25 per cent of the paper in French.

The scheme as outlined has been the result of a long process of finding tentative solutions to a whole number of problems. Staffing, timetabling, common room politics and finance have been in many ways more demanding than the merely pedagogic implications. We have been particularly fortunate since the beginning in having had two Headmasters of unequivocably European outlook whose support has gone some way in convincing dubious colleagues. The all too common criticism of the imperialist attitudes of the modern languages department can be hard to counteract.

The question of who teaches geography and history in French is also a taxing one. At present it appears inevitable that the work must be undertaken by teachers of French whose professional qualifications for the work are incidental to their command of French. Most linguists will have gained some background knowledge in history from their degree course, whilst frequent visits to France as a tourist will go some way in helping prepare geography lessons at the outset. The day ought to come however when a British teacher at secondary level is capable of teaching his subject in a foreign language as and when it seems appropriate. It may well prove possible in the near future for a teacher who has read for one of the newer combined degrees, 'French and history' or 'French with geography', to do this work with the confidence of one who is professionally qualified in both camps. The obvious possibility also presents itself of having this work done by native French speakers. It was thought at Mill Hill that, at any rate in the beginning, the scheme would be more securely launched by teachers who are fully sensitive to the more tangible difficulties and implications of the experiment within the context of the school. Fortunately teachers of French are available whose interests and enthusiasm for what they are attempting to achieve go some way towards making up for their lack of professional knowledge and expertise. All those in our *section bilingue* have been able to spend some time in our link school in Rouen observing geography and history lessons, a rare opportunity which has helped considerably in the elusive search for that special French classroom *ambiance.*

An especially intricate Gordian knot concerns our attitude to correcting linguistic errors made by boys. In many ways, our approach is deliberately ambiguous. On the one hand, the pupils obviously benefit substantially in terms of fluency and comprehension and vocabulary through studying subjects in French. We want this to happen. Yet at the same time we must insist that this gain is of secondary importance. Our scheme fails if we are not successfully teaching history and geography; it fails if we are merely stealing some extra French lessons at the expense of our colleagues. The temptation must therefore be resisted to expound French grammar, or indeed to correct mistakes in French unless they hinder comprehension. The yardstick that we have adopted is that mistakes in the spoken language will be corrected by the teacher simply repeating a boy's sentence in the proper form. For written work the principal criterion is whether a pupil has expressed his view clearly despite any minor or major grammatical error. It is considered that in the '0' level examinations, for example, no boy should be penalised because he has written the wrong form of a verb or not made his adjectives agree. A fourteen year old attempting to explain the erosion of a cliff by the sea wrote: *'... la falaise recule peu à peu juste qu'elle devient une falaise morte, c'est à dire ne plus attaquée par la mer' (sic).* Whilst purists of the language may well cringe, the fact that this boy had no acquaintance with *jusqu'à ce que* and the subjunctive does not make his geographical explanation any the less valid.

The normal presentation of a *section bilingue* class is fairly akin to a *cour magistral* in the French tradition. New material is presented and discussed in class. When it has been digested orally, the boys make their own notes and carry out follow-up research in their workbooks. The method has given rise to the criticism that the pupils play too passive a role, merely answering questions with inevitably short sentences. Moves to overcome this by imposing a more active role upon pupils by introducing, say, a system of mini-projects in history have been less than successful with, oddly enough, the more academically motivated sets. Whereas the less able boys have been all too happy to spend their lesson talking, a linguistically gifted class can show positive impatience with too much oral work and will even ask when they are going to be given 'proper' notes. Needless to say, such examination motivation is firmly resisted.

Financially, after the initial outlay for French textbooks which, despite their state subsidy, are regretfully still expensive by our standards (around £5 a copy if purchased in France and transported privately), a *section bilingue* does not require a great deal of upkeep. Exchanges and field courses abroad are paid for by the pupils, but even here expenses can be kept to the bare minimum of travel. Over the years we have built up a small reference library of French history and geography books together with a number of tapes and filmstrips. Much has been achieved by careful collaboration with other departments over materials like maps, slides and so on.

To attempt some form of evaluation at what is still an early stage of a continuing process is hazardous. A few pointers however have become clear. Enthusiasm amongst the participants is undoubtedly high. There is a sense of participating in something new, vital and rewarding. As the boys grow older, they come to recognise the value of their linguistic ability. A noticeboard with the latest details of jobs advertised in the national press demanding proficiency in a second language is a focal point of interest.

Five generations of boys have completed the '0' level course in history and two in geography. The results in both subjects show a heartening correlation of marks between the papers taken in English and those in French. We do not think that any boy failed either examination because he was a part of the scheme. More strangely, a small number of boys have passed their geography '0' level and failed to obtain a grade C in their '0' level French. We should not like to think that this represents an indictment of our scheme, rather a comment on the nature of the present '0' level papers.

The results of those boys who have gone on to take the AEB 'A' level in French at the end of the lower sixth are less easy to judge. To take an 'A' level on what amounts to less than half the normal lesson time available is a tall order; to do so while maintaining good progress (as my colleagues in the science and mathematics departments not unnaturally insist) in their three main 'A' level subjects is to impose the acid test on the motivation which we are claiming is engendered by our scheme. Since we first started, three generations have sat the AEB examination. With each year our knowledge of which aspects require most emphasis within the limited time available increases. In the years 1974-76, 38 boys took the examination; of these, eight (of whom five in 1974) have failed, all gaining a grade '0', but sixteen gained either an A, B or C. It is worth repeating that this has occurred at a difficult time in post-'0' level French studies. Without our *section bilingue* scheme these 38 boys would not have contemplated continuing their French seriously beyond '0' level. At the same time, a steady twelve or more boys have taken 'A' level each year in the normal way at the end of the upper sixth. Expressed more broadly, if the future of Britain depends to a large extent on its contacts with Europe, on its trade and invisible exports, it is vital for our education system to produce people who, whatever their specialist qualifications, are fully conversant in a second language. As the recent HMC Report points out, industry and commerce have mistakenly '...tended to put the cart before the horse by putting employees through crash language courses'[11]. We should like to think that Mill Hill is able to provide a few of the European businessmen, lawyers, doctors, engineers of the 1980s, who do also just happen to be linguists.

As far as the future is concerned, we started two new developments in September 1977. Firstly, we are offering a course in German for the sixth form which will aim to treat German cultural topics of general interest in such a way as to encourage intensive oral work in the language on the lines of our experience in French. A regional geographical survey will lead to a more detailed study of two specific areas, complemented by a historical section which will consider the contemporary political and social scene. One topic planned, for example, combines Berlin with the *Hitlerzeit,* also providing a platform for some consideration of the art and architecture of the period. Textbook material with filmstrips, tapes and documents will be supplemented by an element of original research. The course will be aimed in the first instance at the non-linguist sixth-former who, having gained an '0' level pass, would normally be forced to drop the language and lose much that he had gained. We are unable to start any work in German on the lines of the French experiment lower down the school because of the late start in the subject. A link exists between Mill Hill and a German school, the Stiftung Landerziehungsheim Schöndorf in southern Bavaria, and a series of family-based exchanges in the holidays, which it is hoped future participants in the German scheme will also take up, is already in operation.

The second innovation is also concerned with attracting pupils to continue their language work in the sixth form, whatever their chosen subjects. It anticipates the possible introductions of 'N' and 'F' examinations, or any other similar broad-based scheme in the sixth form of the future. We intend to take our French B set at the beginning of their second year and teach them two periods a week of geography in French as part of their normal French lessons (there are no possibilities of finding additional periods at the expense of other subjects at present), give some of them the opportunity of going on exchange to Rouen in the spring term and to others the opportunity of a family exchange during the holidays. No '0' level geography is envisaged. Instead, it is hoped that the experience will motivate at least some into a sixth form course starting in 1979 on the lines of the experiment in German. Ultimately, it would be exciting to imagine a candidate for the 'N' examination studying his five subjects, one of which was French or German, some of the five taught partly in the foreign language, and being examined partly in it, both on paper and *viva voce.* That moment is regrettably still a long way off, but experiments of our kind could provide an initial impetus for future reform. For the present, we are looking seriously at making a recommendation for an alternative '0' level which would cater for our specific needs. Perhaps of more fundamental interest are the implications of our present scheme for other subjects (biology?) and for a wider range of pupils. Our experience gained so far shows that the increase in enthusiasm and commitment leads to remarkably fewer problems of comprehension. All the evidence points to the feasibility of undertaking this kind of teaching with pupils of lower intellectual capacity. The examination obligations we have taken on would not be appropriate, but we are firmly of the opinion that the philosophy behind what we are trying to do is no less valid for boys and girls of less academic ability than those we are privileged to be dealing with.

Mill Hill School

Programme of history and geography in French from thirteen plus

Group 1 - Set A French

		Lessons per week	
First year thirteen plus	Basic French course Extra French conversation lessons	5 2	
Second year fourteen plus	Basic French course Geography in French *(Geographie en 3e* - Bordas)	5 2	Four weeks in French school in March, including geography field work project. Sit '0' level French examination.
Third year fifteen plus	History in French . *(Histoire en 3e* - Nathan) (History in English) Begin 'A' level French course (Associated Examining Board	2 3 4	Sit '0' level history examination - three papers, including one special syllabus in French: Europe in 19th century, examined in French
Fourth year sixteen plus	Continue 'A' level French course for summer examinations	3	This is supplementary to candidates three main 'A' level choice; excludes those choosing French as a main subject

Group 2 - Geography set

First year thirteen plus	Basic French course	5	
	Extra French conversation lessons	2	
Second year fourteen plus	Basic French course	5	Two year geography course to ‘0’ level: half English, half French. Field study project in France in summer holidays
	Geography in French *(Géographie en 4e* - Bordas) *(Géographie en 3e* - Bordas)	2	
	Geography in English	2	
Third year fifteen plus	Above continued	5 2 2	Sit ‘0’ level French Sit ‘0’ level geography. Half examined in English; half examined in French

An example of a question set for the history in French paper by the Oxford and Cambridge Board ‘0’ level 1976

La monarchie bourgeoise

Depuis 1830, de quoi avons-nous été accusés, mes amis et moi en particulier, par les défenseurs du parti de l'ancien régime, dans leurs journaux, dans leurs écrits? De vouloir constituer ce qu'on appelait le régime de la classe moyenne...

Je suis fidèle aujourd'hui à l'idée politique qui m'a dirigé toute ma vie. Oui, aujourd'hui comme en 1817, comme en 1820, comme en 1830, je veux, je cherche, je sers de tout mon pouvoir la prépondérance politique des classes moyennes en France, l'organisation définitive et régulière de cette grande victoire qu'elles ont remportée sur le privilège et sur le pouvoir absolu de 1789 à 1830... Mais je veux que cette prépondérance soit stable et honorable et pour cela il faut que les classes moyennes ne soient ni violentes et anarchiques, ni envieuses et subalternes.

Guizot, Discours à la Chambre des Députés, le 3 mai 1837.

(a) *Ecrivez quelques lignes sur la carrière de Guizot.* (3)
(b) *Quelles sont les raisons pour lesquelles on peut considérer la période entre 1830 et 1848 'le régime de la classe moyenne'?* (3)
(c) *Quels groupes ou individus constituaient 'les défenseurs du parti de l'ancien régime' aprés 1830?* (2)
(d) ***Entre la défaite de Napoléon et l'époque où parlait Guizot, quelles victoires avaient été remportées sur 'le privilège et sur le pouvoir absolu'?*** (2)

Examples of questions set for the geography in French paper by the Oxford and Cambridge Board '0' level 1976

1. *Expliquez* ***quatre*** *des affirmations suivantes:*

   (a) *la pêche constitue la seule activité de l'Islande.*
   (b) *le Danemark est avant tout un pays d'élevage.*
   (c) *en Finlande, les glaciers ont laissé un pays tout en creux et en bosses.*
   (d) ***la Suède a toujours été à l'avant-garde de l'industrie métallurgique.***
   (e) *la première richesse de la Norvège est la flotte marchande.*
   (f) *la proximité du cercle polaire a des conséquences importantes pour la vie quotidienne des habitants.* (6,6,6,6)

2. (a) *Dessinez un croquis des pays du Caucase montrant le relief, les républiques fédérées, les villes industrielles, la mer Noire, la mer Caspienne.* (6)
   (b) *En vous référant au climat et à la végétation, faites une comparaison des cultures de la côte orientale de la mer Noire et de la côte occidentale de la mer Caspienne.* (9)
   (c) *Choisissez* ***trois*** *des villes industrielles que vous avez marquées sur le croquis et pour chacune, exposez les avantages pour l'industrie.* (9)

Reference

11 *The teaching and examination of modern languages* Headmasters Conference Report, 1976. p. 13.

Bibliography

Grayson, D *A la page. Books 1-5* Ginn, 1964.
Le Lannou, Maurice *L'Europe et l'Asie soviétique, classe de 4e* (Géographie) Bordas, 1970.
Le Lannou, Maurice *La France, classe de 3e* (Géographie) Bordas, 1973.
Longman Audio-visual French. Stages A2-A4 Longman, 1973-.
Longman Readers Series, Longman, 1971-.
  Feinson, K *Voyage en Aquitaine*
  Leeson, R *Voyage à Paris*
  Pryor, E *Voyage en Provence*
Milza, P, and S Berstein *De la révolution au monde d'aujourd'hui* (Histoire) Nathan, 1972.

4. Goffs School

C G Hadley

Section bilingue experiments began in France in 1969 as one of the fruits of the Franco-German treaty of cooperation. Their aim was to provide a growing number of people more than usually competent in the foreign language and therefore more valuable in the Community context, whatever their eventual role in society might be, and to give an impulsion to language learning in general. The main features of the classes set up were: extra teaching time for the foreign language as an addition to the timetable and not at the expense of other subjects; additional assistant staffing to enable classes to be split for part of the time for exploitation of material learned; the use of other subjects in the curriculum for the teaching of the foreign language; and a class exchange with the linked school in the other country at the end of the first or second year.

The French Ministry of Education was keen to extend the experiment to English and in spring 1972 invited a British delegation (consisting of an HMI from England, an HMI from Scotland, a local authority adviser and a secondary Head) to look at what was happening in France with regard to German and to perhaps consider the feasibility of classes being set up in Britain. As a member of that delegation, I was impressed by the high standard of much of the work, but felt that overall the experiment was not being carefully enough controlled, that much depended on the quality of the assistant and that the teaching of German through other subjects was a pious hope rather than a reality. I was sure that, given the right conditions, the French scheme could be reproduced over here, perhaps in an improved form. In spring 1973 a French delegation, led by the doyen of the *Inspecteurs Généraux* for modern languages, visited Britain and had informal discussions with the Department of Education and Science and a number of local authority officers and schools. It was eventually decided that *sections bilingues* might possibly be set up in three or four schools in Scotland, Somerset and Hertfordshire. It could in no sense be a national or controlled experiment, since neither finance nor other material aid could be provided by the Department and the base for launching a class would need to be the expertise and enthusiasm of the schools concerned and the benevolence of their local authorities. Since the philosophies and organisations of the schools were different, the experiments were bound to be different from conception and will no doubt have progressed along very individual lines. I can speak only of the *section bilingue* established at Goffs School in Hertfordshire.

Our experiment had a twofold aim:

1. to seek to produce a small number of people, entering different walks of life, who would be very fluent in French. (We were not setting out to produce more graduates in French and therefore felt it was important to ensure that the curriculum of those involved was not appreciably distorted and that no vital subject was dropped to give more contact time with French);
2. to compare the results obtained from intensive teaching with those obtained from the usual five year drip-feed approach and to consider the implications for the pattern of language learning in the secondary school.

We were fortunate in having a number of well-qualified and enthusiastic modern languages teachers and an authority prepared to offer not only moral but also financial and staffing support. A pattern for the experiment was fairly quickly evolved:

1. Pupils selected would in the first year receive six or seven periods of French instead of the usual four.
2. One and a half assistants (instead of the usual one) would be provided by the authority to enable the class to be split for part of the time for exploitation of material.
3. Two intensive week-ends would be organised in the first year by the adviser, at residential centres in the country.
4. There would be a fortnight's exchange at the end of the first year with a linked *classe bilingue* at the Lycée Montchapet, Dijon.
5. In the second year, in addition to the normal four periods of French, the class would learn their history (two periods) and geography (two periods) in French. Our history and geography departments took the view that their subjects would be protected as long as the pupils remained in contact with material and concepts during the year; the acquisition of superior text books from France (eg Bordas, *Le Moyen Age,* Collection Pernet 5e), would be a bonus. We hoped to be able to appoint two assistants, with qualifications in history and geography, to teach these subjects.
6. A *camp mixte* would be arranged at the end of the second year for the linked English and French classes.
7. In the third year, in addition to the normal four periods of French, the class would be taught *Etudes de l'environnement* (in lieu of religious studies) in French for two periods a week. Again it was hoped an assistant would be able to do this work.
8. At the end of the third year the pupils would sit '0' level (Cambridge). The total amount of hours spent studying French would approximate to the total of the five year course and a comparison of results would be interesting. Moreover, the examination would give some sense of urgency to the intensive teaching and provide some kind of objective yardstick around half-way through.

9. In the fourth and fifth years, although all the language skills would continue to be developed, much emphasis would be placed on wide reading which would reflect the interests of pupils both in their academic subjects and their hobbies. An 'A0' examination would be negotiated with the Cambridge Syndicate for the end of the fifth year.
10. Financial support would be required from the authority for books and exchanges. New course books would be required because of the pace and nature of the experiment; history and geography books would need to be imported from France, also materials for *Etudes de l'environnement;* a wide private reading scheme was envisaged right from the first year, but especially in the fourth and fifth years. The cost of all this would be beyond the school. All the pupils had to participate in the exchanges and we anticipated a certain number of parents would need financial help.

Selection for the experiment on entry to the school has been varied in each of the three years 1973, 1974 and 1975. The first cohort was composed of pupils who had studied French for two years in the primary school and who were spread over the whole of our (grammar) school ability range. (The French class with which it was to be linked was a year older and had already studied English for at least a year). Because of the pattern of primary French in this area, our pupils tended to come from one part of our catchment only and to be rather middle-class in origin. Consequently we formed our second cohort of some twenty pupils who had studied French apparently with enthusiasm and success in the primary school and some dozen pupils who had not studied French but were right at the top of the ability range. We thus achieved a pretty able group spread over the whole of our catchment area. The third cohort consisted of pupils who had not studied French before and who fell into our middle and lower middle range of ability. Wastage has not been significant, though the original 32 of the first cohort dropped to 26 with movement from the school. However, when the second cohort began its course we found it educationally and administratively more convenient to provide all first year classes with six periods of French. This means that it has been possible to top-up at the end of the first year when there has been movement out of the school. Pressure from parents to have their children selected for the experiment has far outweighed reluctance, and support and enthusiasm from parents involved has been quite exceptional.

Inevitably, as the experiment has progressed, some modifications have had to be made to the original scheme devised. We quickly discovered that assistants are too inexperienced in the craft of teaching to provide the kind of support required by the experiment. At the end of the first year we sought in vain a suitable native-speaker instructor. Then we were given permission to appoint an additional qualified teacher and were fortunate enough to obtain a graduate from a French university with experience of *colonie de vacances* work and a year's assistantship in this country. He took over the history and geography teaching in French and then the *Etudes de l'environnement,* but acted as an ordinary member of the French department for the rest of the time. At the end of 1973/74 we stopped splitting first year classes for exploitation. When the native-speaker left after two years, we tried without success to replace with a qualified French national, but eventually appointed an English graduate in French who had been associated with a *section bilingue* during his year as an assistant. A *camp mixte* was held for cohort 1 at the end of the second year in Brittany. It required an enormous amount of organising and naturally part of the time had to be devoted to English for the French pupils. Consequently for cohort 2 at the end of the second year through the good offices of our languages adviser we took our own centre near Paris for ten days and found our pupils obtained greater benefit. Cost has now become prohibitive, however, and for cohort 3 at the end of their second year we shall simply be repeating the end of first year exchange.

Although after three and a half years we would hesitate to put forward firm conclusions about the experiment, we do feel that we can deduce clear trends. None of these are surprising, but their strength is interesting.

Cohort 1 sat '0' level (Cambridge) in June 1976 at the end of the third year. Of the 26 pupils involved (thirteen boys, thirteen girls), two failed with D grades, four obtained C grades, seventeen obtained B grades and three obtained A grades. Cohort 2 sat '0' level last June at the end of the third year. All 33 pupils passed, four with C grades, thirteen with B grades and sixteen with A grades. It would seem pretty clear that better examination results are achieved after three years of intensive teaching than after five years of even spread.

Cohort 2 seems to be making much the best progress and cohort 3 to be finding the challenge most demanding. Although the intensive approach benefits all the grouping, there is no doubt that the most spectacular results are obtained with the most able.

Social background would appear to be an important factor. Some of the pupils in cohort 1 would be very borderline grammar school in general ability, but were successful because of strong parental support. The experiment appeals to what we might term middle class parents.

The morale of all the cohorts has been very high and there has been no danger, as we originally feared might be the case, of reaction against over-exposure to French. The yearly objectives (visits to France at the end of first or second years and '0' level at the end of the third) have perhaps played an important part in maintaining motivation.

The teaching of other subjects in French is a vital motivating factor, since the natural survival element is maintained continuously. It is important that the subjects involved should have a high reading, listening, writing and speaking requirement and seem important to the pupils.

The quality of the teaching is of course extremely important and more than just a skilled academic approach is needed. The intensive week-ends and the visits to France call for real versatility on the part of the teacher. We have identified each cohort with a particular languages teacher for the first three years with only one cohort so far experiencing a break in continuity of teaching.

Of the language skills there is no doubt that listening and reading comprehension have been developed to an exceptional level; this doubtless results from the early bias required to render the teaching of other subjects through French effective in the second year. Oral production tends to be good to very good (with fluency superior to accent and intonation). Written production in large measure reflects the basic general ability of the pupil, ranging from very good to weakish.

The support of the LEA, moral as well as financial, is absolutely vital and we have been fortunate in having interested and sympathetic officers.

The experiment has not been noticeably resented by other French classes, but seems to have improved their motivation and achievement. One can forsee our '0' level results being improved by more than just the performance of the experiment classes. The morale and keenness of the teaching staff is also boosted.

With three years or so behind us and some pretty clear trends established, we have decided to absorb the experiment, in a modified form, into the normal curriculum of the school in a four-form extended grammar school entry situation. At the end of the first year (with six periods a week) the top two sets emerging for French will receive the intensive treatment. In the second year, in addition to their four periods of French they will receive instruction for French in either history or geography (two periods). It was felt fair to take one class each (as at present) but not two from these departments. Both sets will have a fortnight's exchange with classes in France at the end of the second year. In the third year, in addition to their four periods of French, the sets will have *Etudes de l'environnement* (two periods) in French (the time being taken probably from religious studies and music, which will still continue to keep a foothold in the curriculum). Intensive days will probably replace intensive week-ends in the present economic climate. '0' level will be taken either at the end of the third year or half-way through the fourth. Although the course is rather less intensive than the experiment, we anticipate that our techniques will be improving and the pace will be able to be maintained. The special 'A0' examination will be taken at the end of the fifth year.

We shall, of course, expect to modify the programme in the light of further information provided by the progress of the three cohorts, the last of which will not complete its five year course before 1980. We are clear, however, that an intensive approach for French in one form or another, will remain a permanent feature of our curriculum.

5. Haygrove Comprehensive School **Ann King**

The *Section bilingue* at Haygrove Comprehensive School, Bridgwater, began in 1973 and was promoted at the invitation of the Inspectorate and the Somerset LEA. Its primary objective was to ascertain what could be the effectiveness in this country of a project already established between France and Germany. The following extract from a minute issued by the Académie de Nantes will show what the French understand by *classes bilingues:*

> *'L' expérience des classes de Sixième bilingues a pour but d'entraîner de façon intensive les élèves à la pratique de la langue étrangère......*
>
> *La formule des classes bilingues a été lancée d'abord par les germanistes. Pour les anglicistes elle a commencé l'an dernier (1973) dans six classes....*
>
> *La formule comporte trois heures de cours d'anglais par semaine, et deux heures de travaux dirigés. L'assistant peut être présent aux cours et aux travaux dirigés d'anglais et y participer; de plus, il participe à l'enseignement d'une autre matière choisie selon sa compétence: Education musicale, Education physique, Travaux manuels éducatifs, Education artistique'.*

In this *Académie*, the project begins in the first year of secondary education; the pupils undergo an intensified programme of teaching in the target language; in addition to the normal allocation of lessons in the target language, the pupils are taught some other subject in that language; the foreign assistant is in charge of the teaching of this other subject; the choice of this subject is determined by the interests and qualifications of the assistant. It is obvious that the success of such a scheme depends very much on the quality of the foreign assistant, and, unless he is willing to spend several years in the same school, no on-going programme can be planned, since the *matière choisie selon sa compétence* is likely to change from assistant to assistant. Furthermore, the recommended subjects - music, PE, crafts, or (as is stated elsewhere) - *une initiation un peu folklorique à la cuisine,* would not perhaps lend academic respectability to the project in the eyes of colleagues, parents and pupils, nor would such subjects provide a sufficiently meaty syllabus to stimulate and discipline the teacher of the project.

It is easier for us in this country to make changes in the curriculum, and at Haygrove we were able to follow the example of the Mill Hill project (see Chapter 3) and choose academic subjects, geography and history, to be studied through French. Moreover, our link school in Le Mans was able to choose history and geography as subjects to be studied through the medium of the English language when it set up its *Sixième bilingue* in 1974.

The aim of our course has been to teach geography, in particular the geography of France, and subsequently history, through the medium of French. It has always been our first concern, in this part of the course, that geography should be taught effectively, and that progress in French should be a spin-off. Thus the terminal objective was not that the pupils should be able to talk and write about geography in accurate French, but that they should be able to understand and appreciate geographical facts and concepts via the French language. If this was to be a worthwhile course, it should not be 'capes and bays geography', and it should be studied, if feasible, to examination level. With this in mind, we planned a four-year course, the teaching of which would be chiefly in the hands of a member of the modern languages department, aided by successive French assistants. We hoped also to spend a proportion of our time in France, and to undertake some of the teaching there.

The school and the pupils

When the project began Haygrove School had just been formed from the reorganisation of two grammar schools and a secondary modern school. Its 1,200 pupils were drawn from the town and the surrounding villages, Bridgwater being a small industrial town in rural Somerset. The pupils who began the course were twelve years old, in the second year of secondary education. All had had one year of either an audio-visual or a traditional French course at secondary school, and varying experiences of French at primary level - a disparity which presented difficulties in the choice of a language course.

Pupils took part in the project according to their interest, and the agreement of their parents; thus we hoped to secure two of the essentials - pupil motivation and parental backing. We did not select children according to their ability in French, which would have been difficult to assess, in any case, since they were drawn from three different schools. A significant number of children from the former secondary modern school was included, although not the whole ability range. When, after two years, we were assured of the success of the project with the first group, particularly with the former secondary modern pupils, we extended our net to include children of all abilities, including ten 'slow learners'. Two bilingual classes were set up initially, one containing volunteers drawn from the two grammar schools, the other from all three schools, twelve out of 28 being from the secondary modern school.

Timetabling

The programme envisaged meant a change in the balance of these pupils' curriculum. We wished to include three extra lessons of geography-in-French per fortnight, and they had to be found from somewhere. The solution was either to take over the periods allotted for their normal geography lessons, and to follow the syllabus outlined by the geography department; or to 'borrow' periods from other consenting departments. The geography department was not happy about the first of these solutions, and nor were we, since we preferred to have a free hand in the compilation of the syllabus. The second solution was adopted, and so, with the full cooperation of the English department who felt that any enriched language programme would probably enhance the pupils' consciousness of language, we were given two of their nine fortnightly periods. We obtained our third period from one of the four physical education lessons.

The two groups had to be setted permanently from their peer group for English so that they were not at a disadvantage - their English course was seen as a seven-period unit, and not as a nine-period one, of which they missed two lessons.

In this way the curriculum did not become unbalanced. In the lower school the sixty fortnightly periods are allocated in broad faculty areas as follows:

Maths/science	16 periods
English/drama/modern language	18 periods
Geography/history/RE/Classical studies	11 periods
Design/music/PE	15 periods
	60 periods

It could be argued that within the same broad subject area, extra time was given to the modern languages department to teach geography, a subject which did not already enjoy a large time allocation.

It was easy, therefore, to demonstrate to parents that their children were not studying French at the expense of other subjects; although one or two had slight misgivings about the time spent out of school:

- a full day's intensive language course in the second form;
- a two-week's study-visit to the link school in Le Mans in the third form;
- a three-day residential intensive course) in the fourth form;
- an optional week's field trip in Normandy)
- a three-day residential intensive language course in the fifth form.

However we felt that it was not unreasonable to contend that education of a very full and valid nature is afforded by work outside the confines of the classroom. The carefully structured study-visits to France, with their intensive programmes of work did in fact offer a broad, and broadening educational experience. We enjoyed the support and interest of all our parents, and generous grants from our LEA made it possible for all pupils to take part.

Syllabus

Perhaps our chief concern was that we should teach geography in such a way that qualified geographers would approve, and that pupils would feel that they were undertaking a worthwhile course. One snag was that we wished to use a genuine French geography text book, but that the methodology involved differed from that of English geography courses. Geography, as it is taught at best in English schools, aims at a gradual emergence of spatial concepts and formal operational thought, which aids the child's intellectual development. None of the French resource material we could find fitted in with this, and it is mainly for this reason that we were pleased to be independent of the geography department, and free to develop our own course. We adapted the French resource material to our own purposes, and were subsequently encouraged to see how easily we could match the work we were doing to the Mode 1 geography syllabus of the CSE Board.

We planned a four-year course, leading to a CSE Mode 3 geography examination, in which the question papers and the candidates' answers would be in French. The programme was as follows:

Year 1 (second form)

(a) Physical geography of France, introducing gradually the necessary specialised vocabulary.
(b) The study of two regions - Normandy, Pays Basque.
(c) The examination of some aspects of French life - home-life, school system, holidays, administration etc. Some of these topics provided the basis of group correspondence with the French link school.

Year 2 (third form)

(a) Physical geography: formation of surface features; glaciation; erosion.
(b) Human geography: rural exodus; immigrant workers.

Year 3 (fourth form)

(a) Physical geography: seas and coasts; rivers and canals; weather and climate; the influence of climate, relief and soil upon vegetation.
(b) Human geography: population distribution and variation of human occupation according to resources and physical conditions.
(c) Economic geography: Marseilles, the Rhône Basin and oil; the fishing industry.

(d) Field trip: the study of two fishing ports in Normandy *or* the study of three of Normandy's most popular products (Camembert, cider and calvados).

Year 4 (fifth form)

(a) Economic geography: agriculture and the wine industry; the chief industrial regions, with special reference to the North-east; energy and resources; France and the EEC.
(b) Paris and its development as a centre of industry, communications and trade.
(c) Map reading.

In the fourth and fifth forms we continued to offer geography-in-French as an extra. All the pupils involved were grouped in the top academic band and studied nine examination subjects instead of the usual eight. They were therefore required to work hard, and especially so, since geography-in-French received only three periods per fortnight instead of the six periods that other optional subjects had.

In the two years leading up to sixteen-plus examinations we also offered a history course to GCE '0' level as an option for those pupils who had been in the pilot group, as well as any pupils in the same year group who had shown aptitude in French. We planned a course in conjunction with the history department, based on the Cambridge Board's '0' level syllabus 230/1. For three periods per fortnight the pupils studied British history (1815-1939) in English with a member of the history department, and for the remaining three periods they studied European history (1789-1939) in French with a member of the modern languages department. 24 pupils opted for this course; eight of them were newcomers to bilingual classes, and two of these who experienced difficulties took up the opportunity after half a term of opting out into the normal history course being run concurrently. This was a safety net we felt bound to provide in our timetabling. The course was designed to lead to a two-part examination with papers set in English (British history) and in French (European history).

Staffing

It was considered expedient that the teaching of the geography element of the course should, in the first instance, be in the hands of one person. I took on the responsibility for teaching the geography, and later the history. My teaching experience had been chiefly in modern languages, although I had had some experience of teaching history, and had for a short time studied geography in France. Although it may be regrettable that the teaching has to be done by the modern languages department,[12] it is possible for a non-specialist to undertake the teaching of geography or history to the eleven to sixteen age range provided he has plenty of resource material.

The French language course was shared between two teachers, myself, and another member of the modern languages department who preferred to concentrate on pure language teaching. The school was allotted two French assistants in the first year of the project, and we chiefly used them to help with intensive language work, usually breaking a class of 30 into three groups (with the teacher and the two assistants). The pupils have to make enormous linguistic strides in the initial stages of the project, and anything that can be done to pour French into them is invaluable. Subsequently we had one assistant per year, and we used these *selon leur compétence* to help with either the geography or the history course. This was in addition to their work with other pupils in the school, of course.

Obviously meticulous planning of such an experimental programme is essential, and all lessons have to be carefully structured. Since only two classes following the same programme were involved during the first two years, and neither I nor the assistants had full teaching timetables, we were able to devote one hour per week during school time to minute planning. In the geography element of the course, concepts are of prime importance and the French language is merely the tool. Thus if there are to be comprehension difficulties, visual and verbal examples to facilitate understanding must be worked out in advance of the lesson - well in advance, usually, since it is often necessary to collect resources from an outside source, or to prepare visual stimuli. It would defeat the object of the course if the teacher had to resort to English explanations, or to spend time on language drills.

In the third year the work was opened up to all full-time members of the French teaching staff when three new classes were set up in the second form. This move was to ensure the future of the project in the event of staff resignations, and to demonstrate that it could be continued by other teachers. Five staff were engaged in teaching language to each of the school's five *classes bilingues* and three of these were also teaching geography-in-French, and met for fortnightly planning sessions.

It is perhaps appropriate to mention here that the teaching was supplemented by the County Adviser for language who organised the intensive courses mentioned later in this book and the teams of French assistants who staffed them. (See Chapter 11).

Methods and materials

In teaching the French geography course we saw every reason to adopt the same audio-visual techniques which we use for teaching the French language throughout the modern languages department. To introduce the new material visually to the pupils we used slides, filmstrips and overhead-projector transparencies. Gradually the *répétition* and the *exploitation* phases can be omitted as the pupils grow more accustomed to French as a teaching medium. Even more care must be taken than in the pure language lessons to ensure that the pupils are totally involved, and to be sensitive to their linguistic needs. It was especially important to boost confidence by the acceptance of any utterance that conveyed meaning, without correction, except for teacher-transposition in certain cases; and by plenty of encouragement, particularly for those experiencing most difficulty. This involves, of course, a readjustment of teacher-expectation in the geography or history course, where the first objective must be comprehension, followed closely by fluent use of the language, but not necessarily totally accurate use.

Financing such a course is a critical factor, and there are unlikely to be suitable resources available already in an English school. One can economise, particularly in the early stages, on written materials, but visual stimuli are indispensable, and usually expensive. We have been fortunate in being able to draw on the very well-stocked resource collections of the Somerset Language Centre and the French Embassy. We made all our OHP transparencies in our own resource centre. Our costs were further offset by an initial grant from the LEA, and a very generous grant from the French Embassy which enabled us to buy books and slides direct from France. We are also grateful to a number of publishers for their generosity.

Books and other materials which were found to be useful are listed in the bibliography, although more detailed mention must be made of three books which formed the basis of our geography and history course. Our bible has been *La France: géographie 3e,* Prévot, Boichard and Sifflet, which was given to the pupils at the beginning of the second year of the project. They kept it until the end of the course. It is packed with visual material; beside the text there is a glossary (in French, of course) of new terms used, and sometimes explanatory diagrams; there is an atlas which opens out from inside the front cover of the book, so that the relevant map can be open alongside the text. There are invaluable teacher's notes, and a pupil's workbook which we have not found very useful. There are two collections of slides with excellent teaching notes which are intended to supplement the text book: *Géographie physique de la France* and *Géographie économique et humaine de la France.* These slides are expensive, but if money were short I would be inclined to buy them in preference to a text book for the pupils. The language in the text books is complex and at every stage we found it preferable to introduce the pupils to new material audio-visually before they read the text.

We also found a French primary school book useful: *Ma géographie en couleurs* (Cours Moyen, 2e année) by P Valette, E Personne and B Lechaussée. This served as a basic text in the first year of the project, and has subsequently provided supplementary material.

For our two-year history course we chose *De la révolution au monde d'aujourd'hui* (Histoire 3e), collection Milza-Berstein. It has been necessary, however, to structure our own course based on its general chapter headings, and to work mainly from worksheets and written extracts. The school history department was found to be well stocked with filmstrips and slides, but it has been difficult to find sufficient relevant source material written in French.

Integral transmission of concept with language

One of the problems we encountered was being misunderstood by 'outsiders'. Opinions ranged from those who thought we were just 'doing background' to the more worrying attitude of our CSE Board, who advised us that in their opinion the intervention of a foreign language in a geography examination would only be a handicap to the candidates. On the contrary, it is the intervention of English which would have been a handicap. Having spent four years studying geography entirely through the medium of French, the pupils would have found it difficult, in some cases impossible, to find an English label for most of the concepts they had learnt - *agglomération, périphérie, plantes xérophiles, étiage, colmatage, défricher* .... Names of geographical features, like *calanque, garrigue, bocage,* for which there are no convenient English equivalents, are for the pupils aggregations of visual and verbal representations. The word and the concept have been acquired simultaneously, the word being an integral part of the object it denotes.[13]

In this connection there are parallels with the way in which children acquire their mother-tongue, and there is much that can be learnt from this about how best to assist pupils to learn subjects in a foreign tongue. Let us start with the premise that all comprehension is the reduction of uncertainty and apply it to a situation - the teaching of the concept *calanque,* for example. The stages in the pupil's understanding of this concept, and the matching of it with the word, can be outlined:

(i) The broad contextual clue is inherent (geography).
(ii) The broad visual clue is presented (slide of coast, rocks...).
(iii) Syntactic clues are available; pupils gradually learn to pick out verbal signposts:

  (a) *sur cette image vous verrez une* ________ (they expect a noun)
  (b) there are prepositions, etc, which guide them when sorting out the sentence.

The sentence is not a stream of undifferentiated sounds, and pupils soon develop the techniques of listening for gist, a technique described by Salter:

> 'gist (or rather more than gist) understanding of language .... containing some unfamiliar elements so that the pupil has to use his powers of inference and prediction'.[14]

(iv) Specific visual clues are presented. The uncertainty about the meaning of the new lexical item is further reduced by gesture, to indicate narrowness, height of cliffs, etc.

All these stages are interdependent: the pointing alone could just indicate 'look at the blue sea'.

Within the context of this project, aural comprehension is a quickly acquired skill, and the pupils involved in the pilot groups developed an ability to understand complex technical French by the second year of their course. Nor was this gist understanding, nor entirely the other main type of comprehension outlined by Salter:

> 'the precise detailed understanding of language spoken by a
> native speaker at normal speed, but containing only or largely
> vocabulary and structures already encountered'.

It was a third type, a combination of the two - a precise understanding of sentences containing one or more unfamiliar elements (a strange structure, a strange tense, or a new lexical item).

There are many pointers in the project for the teaching of modern languages, not the least of which is the increased efficiency with which aural comprehension is acquired. This is surely because language and concept are absorbed *pari passu,* replicating closely in a way not possible in normal foreign language courses the processes used in the acquisition of the mother-tongue.

Active use of the language

The stated aims of the geography course were confidence and fluency in the use of the language, without over-insistence on accurate use. The teacher's acceptance of any utterance that would make sense to a native speaker has a considerable positive effect on pupil motivation. Pupils involved in the project acquired a wide vocabulary, not only receptive, but productive, as well as an ability to communicate confidently. This was best observed in France during the study visits, when most pupils conversed naturally with French nationals, either in the classroom or on educational visits (to factories etc), in order to obtain information. The key factor is that the target language is demonstrably an instrument of communication, and not an end in itself.

The pupils undertook writing from the outset, although it was limited initially to labels for diagrams and maps, and to the copying of simple sentences which summarised what they had been learning. Content was always introduced orally, and then discussed, and any notes in their books were composed as a group-exercise first, then written on the board for the pupils to copy. This is an additional teaching point, of course - the re-use of acquired structures.

In the same way, most written tests demanded answers which left little margin for error, except in spelling - one-word answers or sentences they had rehearsed before. When they were set deliberately open-ended questions they produced answers which were correct factually, but very muddled linguistically. However they were accomplishing all we should have asked of them within the context of the aims we had laid down. Had we given them more practice in writing unguided answers they would no doubt have done better. The essential difference between these pupils and those who follow a normal French course is that these pupils have the confidence to commit their ideas to paper in any way they can. They are apt to do the same orally, and it is quite usual for them to begin sentences, as they would in their mother-tongue, without have rehearsed the middle and end.

I should perhaps stress that we did not, of course, exclude all ideas of accuracy. Many of the pupils displayed a high level of correctness in the spoken and the written use of the language. It must be remembered that the geography course had three contacts per fortnight, whereas the pure language course had seven (in the second and third forms) or six (in the fourth or fifth forms). There was plenty of opportunity in the language course to instil the habit of accuracy.

We observed minimal transfer of training from the geography course to the pure language course, and *vice versa*. A possible reason for this may be that the intellectualisation of language is an unnatural process which has nothing to do with language growth - but not enough seems to be known about the process of transfer.

Future developments

Before *sections bilingues* were set up in maintained schools, an article in the journal of the National Association of Language Advisers[15] examined the French *classes bilingues* using German as a teaching medium, and concluded that such experiments could enjoy success in this country 'provided selection of children could be accepted in such an experiment'. If this means selection according to ability, then the Haygrove experiment has proved that such selection is not necessary, nor perhaps desirable. Many former secondary modern pupils in the pilot project performed very well - one ex-secondary modern boy achieving the top mark in the geography-in-French examination at the end of the first year, and then going on to do exceptionally well in the rest of the course.

The project was opened to the whole ability range in September 1975, when the second batch of pupils began the course. The slow learners coped well, possibly because it provided them with a language course at which they could not really fail. They were confident to speak the target language, and coped with written work at least as competently as they did with written work in English. There were a few pupils in both the pilot group and the second group who would have liked to have given up the study of the French language while continuing to study geography-in-French. Perhaps there is a future for the project, although not the only one, as a foreign language course for the lower ability pupils for whom reasonable targets might be a high level of comprehension, and the ability to converse freely, although not necessarily with accuracy, in the target language.

In consultation with staff and parents it was planned, when the second group started, that a programme of bilingual studies could be offered at Haygrove as follows:

Year 1

Six mixed-ability classes. All pupils to have eight periods of French per fortnight; one of these to be used on a regular basis for teaching another subject through French, to be chosen by the teacher (art, environmental studies ...).

Years 2 and 3

Pupils would opt for a two-year self-contained course in geography-in-French. There would be a two-week study-visit to France in Year 3. (Previous experience showed that enough pupils would opt for this course to form two or three sets).

Years 4 and 5

Optional courses in geography-in-French and bilingual history for those pupils who would be likely to benefit. Field-work in France to be part of the geography course in Year 4.

The decision to expand the scheme in this way shows that it was considered a worthwhile venture. There has subsequently been a number of staff resignations which have made it inevitable that bilingual teaching be abandoned at the school at the end of this academic year, when the pilot group leave, and the second batch will have reached the end of their two-year course.

Evaluation

The project will be finally evaluated when examination results are available. At the time of writing, pupils in the pilot group are undertaking '0' level examinations in French, and in bilingual history (Paper 1: British history in English; Paper 2: European history in French), and CSE examinations in geography-in-French. It will be interesting to see how they perform, and to see how many of them choose to continue language study in the sixth form.

Public examinations are not the only, nor perhaps the most appropriate means of *evaluating work undertaken in the school.* The criteria for the inclusion of modern languages in the curriculum might, I think, be paraphrased as follows:

(i) There should be general public support for the inclusion of modern languages in the curriculum.
(ii) The study of modern languages should be compatible with the aims, method and organisation of the school.
(iii) The subject should contribute to the individual's personal development, and his knowledge and eventual control of his environment.
(iv) It should satisfy certain needs of society (a) by imparting vocational skills of recognised value; and
(b) by contributing to the individual's sense of national and international citizenship.

We can perhaps apply these criteria broadly to the *section bilingue* project as we undertook it at Haygrove.

Both the first two conditions are critical to the smooth running of the course. We took pains that they should be fulfilled, and I think they were. The pupils derived pleasure from the course and there was a very low drop-out rate. We hope they also derived benefit, but this can perhaps only be assessed in the long term. In the short term, teaching another subject through French has had many beneficial effects, chiefly because the pupils acquire language in as natural a way as is possible within the confines of the classroom. The very high level of comprehension our pupils developed promoted their confidence in the language and alongside this developed their ability to speak. Not only did they acquire a capacity for understanding French they had never heard before, but most of them developed the capacity of creating new language.

Just as with native speakers the pupils have little or no time to reflect as they learn new words associated with the object they denote. There is no time to apply grammatical rules and it is possibly for this reason that many of the utterances our pupils produced were ungrammatical, but nevertheless entirely comprehensible to native speakers. Furthermore, if in the context of modern languages, a pupil's control of his environment means an ability to feel at home in the language and to be able to use it to affect the situation, then I think we can say that the third condition is fulfilled.

As far as the first part of the fourth condition is concerned, no-one would deny that the ability to speak a modern language is a vocational skill of recognised value. The second part of this condition has been interpreted as 'empathic capacity...the ability to understand other people's feelings, to appreciate the details of their behaviour and to respond appropriately'. (Burstall, 1974). It has been implied that modern languages may not be, perhaps, the only or the best discipline for promoting this capacity for empathy - the social sciences would possibly be more appropriate subjects. If we accept that this is so, then I would suggest that the pupil's understanding of France and Europe is more efficiently developed if the geography or history of France is studied through the medium of its own language. Empathic capacity possibly 'develops more rapidly when the pupils are brought in direct contact with a foreign culture than when they are attempting to learn a foreign language in a monocultural setting'.[16]

References

12 Brown, M W F 'Teaching history and geography through the medium of French' *The European Teacher,* 4, 4, 1974.
13 Britton, James *Language and learning* Allan Lane, Penguin Press, 1970.
14 Salter, M V 'The place of foreign languages in the whole curriculum of the school' *Modern Languages,* 56, 1, 1975.
15 Romanis, Bill 'Sections bilingues in French schools' *NALA Journal,* 4, 1973. p.34.
16 Burstall, Clare, and others *Primary French in the balance* National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, 1974. p. 236

Bibliography

Bilingual education

Bartley, Diana E *Soviet approaches to bilingual education* Center for Curriculum Development, Philadelphia, 1971.

Teaching geography

Debesse, Marie Louise Arviset *La géographie à l'école* Presses Universitaires de France, 1969.
Dobson, F R, and H E Virgo *Map reading and local studies* (A New School Geography, Vol 3) English Universities Press, 1967.
George, Pierre *Dictionnaire de géographie* Presses Universitaires de France, 1970.
Rhys, W T, 'Geography and the adolescent' *Education Review,* 24, 3, June 1972.
Unesco *L'enseignement de la géographie* Hachette, 1966.

Geography textbooks

(a) The following were used as textbooks at Haygrove School:

Prévot, V, J Boichard and A M Stifflet *La France, geographie 3° cycle* (plus excellent teacher's notes) Belin, 1973.
Valette, P, E Personne and B Lechaussée *Ma géographie en couleurs* Nathan, 1963.

(b) The following were largely used as resource books for the teacher:

Brunet, R, *editor* Series: *Découvrir la France* Larousse, 1976-. (Separate volumes on different regions of France. Beautiful colour photographs and excellent maps)
Contri, H, R Chapuis, A Robert and J-C Wieber *L'Europe (Géographie 4e)* Belin, 1972.
Girod, R, and F Grand-Clément *Comment vivent les français* Hachette, 1969. (useful statistics etc graphically presented - but rather dated now)
Michaud, Guy, and Georges Torrés *Nouveau Guide France* Hachette, 1974.
Oria, M *Géologie (Sciences Naturelles 4e)* Hatier, 1963-.
Pinchemel, Philippe *La France. Tomes 1 et 2* Colin, 1969 and 1970.
   Tome 1: Les conditions naturelles et humaines
   Tome 2: Les milieux: campagnes, industries et villes
(a very full reference book, with an excellent bibliography and resource list)
Prévot, V, and W Diville *Géographie de la France* Belin, 1968.

(c) Resources for the pupils:

Series: *Bibliothèque de Travail* European Schoolbooks
Colyer, Penrose *La vie en France* (Longman French Pack) Longman

Atlas, maps

Cartes IGN catalogue from IGN-Cartes, 107 rue de la Boétie, Paris
Hardy, René *Grand atlas de la France* Reader's Digest

Filmstrips, slides

En avant 4A (filmstrips on the Pays Basque) E J Arnold
Slides which supplement Prévot, V, J Boichard and A M Sifflet *La France, géographie 3e:*

   Géographie physique de la France (14 sets) Diapofilm
   Géographie économique et humaine de la France (6 sets) Diapofilm

Other sources:

   Documentation Française, 29 Quai Voltaire, Paris
   Documentation Photographique (annual subscription)
   French Embassy: Service Culturel (lending service)

Television

We found two BBC TV series useful, and videotaped them in the school resource centre:

Quatre Coins de la France: La vie à la mer (Brittany)
La vie d'un village (Najac)
La vie en Province (Villefranche)
La vie à la Paysanne (Wine making, Roquefort, pâté du Périgord)

Tout Compris (Life of some French teenagers living in a small town)

History

Milza, P and S Berstein *De la révolution au monde d'aujourd'hui (Histoire 3^e)* Nathan, 1972.
Slides: *Documents d'histoire de France* Diapofilm (distributed by European Schoolbooks)
Topic folders: *Austerlitz; Versailles; 1789, Naissance d'une révolution* Delpire

Study visit

King, Ann 'Motivation in Le Mans' *Educational Exchange* 20. Summer 1975.

Part two: Intensive courses within schools

6. King's Manor School

Betty Matthews

Kings Manor is an 1,800-size, mixed comprehensive school on the south coast, about four miles west of Brighton, formed about eight years ago by the union of two secondary modern schools, one for boys and one for girls. The intake from middle schools at twelve-plus is well-balanced with little creaming to a few private schools. Parents work in local light industry, in the port, in Brighton or commute to London. Unemployment is minimal. Organisation is in bands and for all five classes in the first band four years of French is compulsory; for four classes in the second band French is compulsory for two years, and in the fourth year these pupils have the option of following a French Studies course with a Mode 3 CSE in the fifth year. German and Spanish are offered to about 60 pupils in year two who have shown ability in French.

Before this experiment, the department of languages was producing good CSE results but the number of '0' level passes was declining. This, combined with the increase in numbers of those successfully taking physics (60) maths (90) English language (100), meant that the department had poor status, both as regards the other departments and the pupils. A clear '0' level class existed followed by a second class which was better than CSE but was too inaccurate to pass '0' level. The aim in running this experimental course was to give a boost to these pupils.

The original intention was to have a French fortnight at the beginning of the fifth year but, as this met with considerable opposition from other departments, the course became eight half-days spread over a fortnight at the end of the summer term in the fourth year. In this way other departments lost their pupils only once during the course. It had been hoped to have help from the nearby university, college of education or polytechnic, but July was not a suitable month for them.

The format became a series of hour-long lessons or lectures, given by different teachers, based on the various skills required at '0' level by the Associated Examining Board; letter writing, an essay in the past tenses, reading comprehension with answers in French, translation from French to English and a structured oral test. Each lesson was followed by a half-hour tutorial (one tutor to three pupils) when the lesson was discussed, difficulties explained and a worksheet based on the lesson begun. This worksheet was completed for homework and a further tutorial preceded the next day's lesson to help with any other problems. The worksheet was then handed to the relevant member of staff for marking. In order to supplement the six language staff tutors, we used sixth form 'A' level candidates. Their worries were discipline and the adequacy of their French. They soon discovered that their French was quite adequate and this work provided a valuable form of revision for them. Discipline was dealt with in two ways: two tutorial groups shared a room and one tutor was always a teacher; and a roundabout system was organised so that no pupil had the same tutor twice and had a fair share of teacher-tutors. One member of staff was unattached so that he or she could be turned to for assistance.

Strong opposition was experienced from other departments. There were some drawbacks because of loss of pupils; because they had to substitute for language staff, and because of some suspicion that the language department was attempting to seek advantage, probably at their expense. For the pupils, the end of the fourth year was too distant from the exams to have a lasting effect, especially because of the long summer holidays. Some of the pupils were clearly not good enough to pass and, therefore, did not take '0' level. Those not selected were very resentful and there was a good deal of muttering about their time having been wasted. There were, however, advantages. All those pupils entered for '0' level passed and the numbers passing increased from 29 to 43. This project has clearly been of value to the candidates and has also boosted the morale and the standing of the languages department.

Following on this initial experience a second course was organised for another group of similar ability, hoping to take '0' level in 1977. This time only pupils who were clearly the best were selected and all were entered. The course was held on a Friday and a Saturday in January of the fifth year and teachers only were used as tutors, plus the Headmaster and the Language Adviser. Before the course an attempt was made to analyse the weaknesses of the group and these were identified as the perfect tense especially of verbs with *être* and the reflexive verbs, the agreement of past participles and the use of the imperfect tense. The first lesson was devoted to this area of weakness, followed by a language laboratory session. Pupils returned to the language laboratory to study a specially-produced tape whenever they had a spare moment. This tape was also available during school time after the course. Otherwise the format was as before. The lesson on oral skills was very successful; two teachers took part, one playing the role of the examiner and the other playing the part of a not very able candidate, who as well as speaking in French to the 'examiner' made frequent asides aloud to the audience. This was amusing as well as instructive.

Opposition from other departments was a good deal less this time. Some slight opposition did come from within the department because of working on a Saturday but this only from one person. The pupils did not show any reluctance to give up their Saturday. Organisation *vis à vis* the school was much easier and although there was actually less time overall allocated to the second course than to the first, the second was more successful because it was continuous and the pupils had a very definite feeling of having progressed. There has been a clear improvement in their work both in standard and accuracy.

On both occasions the part most enjoyed by staff and pupils alike has been the tutorials: relationships became more friendly without loss of respect; there was a feeling of caring and involvement on both sides. It is hoped that the second format will be followed next year and that the tutorial system may be developed where possible.

7. Archbishop Michael Ramsey School David Cross

Organisation and timetabling

The Archbishop Michael Ramsey School is a seven-form entry Church of England comprehensive school in South London. The area, and the school, has its fair share of problems and yet in the modern languages department teacher-strain has been greatly reduced, the pupils are highly motivated and greatly enjoy their language lessons. We not only cope with mixed-ability teaching throughout the school, we thrive on it. This is mainly a result of some quite minor changes of organisation and of changes of aims and the content of the course.

The changes were obtained largely because the members of the department are a united and enthusiastic team. Our Headmaster and the Director of Studies took our proposals seriously, and gave us the chance to implement the changes we requested. Other heads of department were cooperative and helped us to negotiate the timetabling changes shown in Table 1. The whole story is not visible. The first major step of timetable re-organisation was taken by the whole school. Instead of functioning as the seven-form entry school that we are supposed to be, the intake of 210 pupils is divided into eight forms of mixed-ability. Consequently, the maximum class-size throughout the school is 25 or 26 pupils. Additionally timetabling is much more flexible. Pupils go to lessons in blocks of four classes. This enables my department to allocate four teachers to the block and to teach rotating modules.[17]

In the first two years we have the pupils only once a week for one double period. Each teacher prepares only one module, a set of ten weekly lessons. These modules are independent and can be taken in any order. Every tenth week the teachers rotate to a new class in the block so that by the end of the forty week academic year they have taught their module four times and have met every child in the block. As there are two blocks, we do in fact teach our module eight times during the year. Naturally lesson preparation is very much reduced, giving us ample time to amass exactly the teaching materials we require. The pupils are never more than nine weeks from an end of unit; they know that the last lesson contains a test of the content of the course, because all end of year reports have to be contributed to by all four teachers. The result is that they have a short-term goal: a carefully prepared module, followed by a test and a move to a new unit, a fresh start, a new interest.

The four modules in the first year comprise a linguistic module in which we examine the structure and the irregularities of English; an Italian module in which the pupils learn to function in a foreign language in a series of basic situations and a double module of a European studies-type course in which we look at the cultures and some aspects of the history and geography of European language groups. This last double module retains the ten-week cycle by having a factual section with a test at week ten followed by project work on special interests. Two teachers team-teach a two-class group for this double unit.

The four modules in the second year are similar but the foreign language is now German and the cultural spotlight is focussed upon German-speaking countries for the double module. The linguistics unit remains and we teach grammatical concepts and labels that will be valuable in subsequent foreign language learning, both in school and, we hope, later in life.

The results of the module approach, in addition to the teacher-benefits already mentioned, can easily be imagined. Every tenth week we have a class of enthusiastic beginners. We get to know and to teach all the pupils in the school. A sudden teacher departure is relatively harmless as no pupil has lost 'his' teacher. A replacement teacher finds a ready-made set of ten lessons that he can easily adapt to suit his own personality. More important, one teacher of a minority language can have his subject sampled by the entire population of the school. The choice of languages taught in the first two years is not critical; a new specialist can introduce a new language at any point. Short sixth form courses can ensure continuity where this is desirable. By the beginning of the third year we all face 210 children who are confidently approaching a new language.

We now meet the children for three double-periods weekly, because this third year is a pre-option sample year and to offer again a smattering level of a language would be to tempt some pupils into an option for which they would be unsuited. They come to us not as complete beginners. They are aware of the cultural background of Europe, they are familiar with the structure of their mother tongue and in addition, because of reference to the little Italian they know, they have come face to face in their second year linguistics module with concepts such as gender and adjectival agreement. An added benefit is their maturity; they are ready to move forward at a rate far greater than that achievable by an eleven year-old. At a stage when many language courses begin to grind almost to a standstill - and after three years of compulsory single language study for five lessons a week it is a fact that progress had slowed - our pupils are ready to leap into a new language; a language to which they bring their learned strategies.

The third year

This is a pre-option year and the three double periods a week which we now have available enable us to make this rigorous and to reach a comparatively sophisticated standard. Our aim remains primarily one of imparting an elementary ability to communicate. After all many of our pupils will abandon language studies at the end of this year and it would be unfair to them to regard this year as step one on the road to a public examination. This would immediately brand all of the non-continuers as failures and do much to enhance the current poor attitudes to foreign language learning that exist in Great Britain. Accordingly we offer a French course that for the first two terms is very much based upon situational usage. A certificate grade 5 is obtainable by the pupils at the end of their first term; a grade 4 certificate is won by some at the end of the second term, by which time all pupils should normally have achieved the survival French necessary for gaining the grade 5 certificate.

The approach to the third year is again modular. For one month there is a common-core induction; each teacher stays with one class for the whole of that month and teaches some basic French - greetings, class-room commands, question asking, numbers, prices, times, basic measures. After that month we revert to the rotation system and each teacher prepares a one week (three double-lessons) unit upon a given topic. The units are not cumulative and each teacher teaches his unit four times, spending one week with each of the four classes in each block. As shown in Table 2, in addition to the induction course we have to prepare only six modules and our lesson preparation is finished until the following April! Naturally a good standard is achieved because again we have ample time to prepare transparencies, slides, handouts and flash cards. We pirate any available courses for supportive material, *Chouette* and *Eclair* are useful as they readily lend themselves to individual teacher-interpretation.

For the last ten weeks of the academic year we prepare the pupils who hope to continue French or German for a 'language bath' approach. In other words we do not want them to use English in the class-room; our own use of English is to be minimal also. To this end we drill them to be able to elicit information from us in the foreign language; to obtain permission to leave school to follow up a project, to get a tape recorder, a reader, all such functions must be carried out in the foreign language, and must be taught now in preparation for next year. We ensure that these final weeks are rigorous in order that any pupil who has made a wrong choice in taking a language-option may now be quite aware of the demands that will be made upon him in years four and five. At this stage he can still change his mind if he finds our expectations different from his own.

The actual method followed in years four and five is probably less important than the fact that we now have extra time available for motivated pupils.[18] Table 3 compares our timetabling with the traditional timetable. Remember too that the second and third years of a traditional timetable become increasingly problematic. As pupils find the cumulative task too difficult, it is at these stages that more civilisation topics are introduçed, often in English; language puzzles, work sheets and games replace the high level of oral work that is evident in beginner classes.

With the usual timetable too little time remains after options at the end of the third year to achieve a high degree of fluency, especially if the school equates language success with examination success and the backwash of the examinations is allowed to influence the aims of language teaching.

Bain de langue

Our aim is to produce people who can communicate readily in the target language. If our methods are to reflect those aims[19] then we will have to confront our pupils with a variety of voices, accents, dialects, as well as with a comparatively uncensored choice of words and structure. They will have to be practised in opening and sustaining intelligent conversation upon a variety of topics and in a wide range of settings, both formal and informal. Obviously no text book could satisfy such requirements, nor would we achieve such aims by putting one class-room group with one teacher for any length of time. We obviously have to produce materials that will promote extended oral and aural work and we have to put a host of skilled language users in a face to face situation with our pupils. Both requirements are comparatively easy to satisfy.

We ask for the extra time owing to us in return for time we released in lower-school to be allocated as two complete half days. This avoids wasted time as a result of lesson changeover, it gives us time to develop projects in depth and allows us to break out of the classroom for an excursion to a place of interest that will stimulate language use. In order to obtain a good pupil-teacher ratio we have an '0' level group and a CSE group on paper only. The two teachers assigned to these classes keep all the pupils together and team-teach. Normally post-option classes are smaller, rarely are there more than twenty pupils in a fourth year class; so we have some three dozen pupils with two teachers. We assign our assistant to the language-bath and now we are three! The next step is to write to universities, colleges, other schools and invite interested persons to come and observe our unique set-up. In return, the visitors are expected to participate in some form of teaching, perhaps only for a few minutes, perhaps to a small group, perhaps to the whole double-class. They come, they talk to our children and they offer something of the real world of language. Not knowing what our pupils have learned or been exposed to they are unable to conform to the linguistic habits so quickly adopted by a class teacher. Our pupils soon learn to recognise the alternative forms of questions and to listen carefully for comprehension; they learn not to be confused by use of unknown patterns.

Our two and a half hour session starts with an hour's oral work. This is creative use of language, not drills. The children hear and use language which has been composed spontaneously. The topic is the events of that same day. What has happened or will happen to them, in the locality, in Britain, in Europe, in the world. All we require is an overhead projector, a cassette recorder and one member of the team who is prepared to get up early and listen to the news on the radio. In terms of equipment the course is very economical.

We listen to English and French news-bulletins, to national and local stations, because it is the interesting items that we require rather than political news. Four or five items are selected and then written into an appropriate form of French. We can deliberately introduce structures that we wish to expose the pupils to, but inevitably the very nature of the news ensures that we include a representative cross-section of everyday language.

The actual writing of this news takes only a few minutes. Over breakfast it is a pleasant task and ensures family discussion of current affairs. The scrappy, coffee-stained piece of paper is then transported to school where it is examined by a native speaker for obvious discrepancies. After minor adjustments it is quickly 'processed'. A French person records the news three times. The first version is at a slightly slower than normal speed, the second version is 'exploded' to allow use of the pause button after each phrase, the third version is recorded at as fast a speed as possible. Meanwhile a team member writes the news on to an overhead transparency. Lexical items that may not be understood are then chosen and explained in French on a second transparency; this is our dictionary. Next, a few written questions are prepared, and last of all a masking transparency is produced which, when laid over the first transparency, masks all verbs and any item upon which we wish to focus attention. This may sound complicated but the whole process takes a maximum of ten minutes and it will stimulate creative use of language for three teachers and a double class-group for at least an hour. The content is adult and hence not beneath the mental age of the pupil, as are most readers and text books. It is of their world and is immediate; the news is worthy of discussion and attention. They come to realise that their command of French is functional and that they are using and understanding exactly the same type of French as does every Frenchman on every morning of his life. The text is not unreal, cooked up for the express purpose of imparting a teaching point. We feel too that pupils will learn best by focussing upon the meaning, rather than upon the language, by being really interested in the message.[20] (An example of a news item and how it can be packaged for different age-groups, is shown as an appendix).

When the pupils come into the room they find our 'dictionary' already projected on to the screen. They read this, understanding new words through the medium of the foreign language, then they copy it into their books. This exercise has several benefits. It copes with the problem of children arriving at different times from different tutorial groups; it stops any chatting in English whilst they wait for the lesson to start; it thrusts them immediately into the medium of French and it gives them a sense of urgency,- not a moment is to be wasted! Additionally, we, the teaching team, gain a few moments in which to plug in the tape recorder, assign teaching roles, finish off a transparency or even design a 'blitz-lesson' upon an interesting point of grammar that is apparent in that day's bulletin. Within five minutes, as the first arrivals finish copying, we are ready for the aural and oral work.

One teacher moves to the front and masks the OHP. Uncovering one example at a time, he gets a pupil to read a new word and the explanation. He checks in French for understanding among the class then gets the whole class to read the explanation before continuing down the list. This whole exercise takes only a couple of minutes and gives all the pupils a chance either to read aloud or to contribute to this elucidation.

At this point one of us may ask the pupils what has happened in the news today. They are usually aware of the more depressing items; earthquakes, plane crashes and assassinations. Having very quickly assessed their knowledge of events we play our own first version. We stop after each complete news item and check in French for at least partial understanding. The British weather forecast is the final item. On a poor news day this can easily be padded; one can give, or even invent a weather-forecast for France. Coupled with a map of France this can also be a valuable lesson upon the geography of the country.

They have now listened once to the entire news-cast. Some have understood virtually everything, others only a part. The second version is then played. This is the version with the slight pauses which enable us to hold the tape in order to fire off short questions, most of which require little more than a repetition of the phrase that has just been heard. *'Où? Qui? Pourquoi? Combien?'* The whole class choruses the response and understanding is deepened by the very nature of the question.

Now we offer them the 'newspaper'. The written version is projected on to the screen for rapid reading for comprehension. Pupils have been taught during their introductory year to get explanations of words or phrases that they have not understood. Soon they have all read and come to understand the entire text.

Our assistant takes a quick reading aloud exercise. Masking all except one news item at a time he checks for serious faults of pronunciation by individuals and also exploits some chorus repetition. Again pupils are free to elicit explanation of a word or phrase which they realise they have not properly understood.

Question and answer

Our question and answer session is unique. The pupils ask us, or each other, the questions. Harry Rée, who teaches with us on one half day a week, introduced a novel variant of this question session. I almost winced as he asked the class to stand, almost forty of them, explaining that they would each have to ask him one original question before they sat down. I visualised a fifteen minute wait for the slower pupils whilst the first pupils to sit became more and more restless. To my astonishment, standing on a chair like an orchestra conductor, he had the whole class seated in what seemed like only a few moments. I repeated the approach a week or so later with a stop watch and indeed the whole class was seated in less than two minutes. We've done the same thing many times since and we have never yet exceeded two minutes. It is not simply a matter of every child rote-learning one question. He has to listen to all the other pupils. If his prepared question is asked he has quickly to compose another, perhaps even a third or fourth. We give the weaker pupils a chance to ask a question early on but in the quick fire of question and answer they are unaware of our discrimination. This ability to produce questions so easily impresses visitors, yet surely this is one of the principal functions of language for the majority of our pupils. Hence this function must be taught, practised, and produced in appropriate situations.

Our own prepared questions are projected at this stage. They have been designed to produce manipulation of language, changes of structure - even completely new items of information. Each question is read aloud by a pupil, answers are offered until finally a full-sentence answer has been obtained and written on to the OHP by a teacher. The pupils accept that this exercise is artificial, that an answer of this sort is related to examination success rather than to the achievement of natural communicative competence. During the fifth year we treat this routine as a written exercise. Progressively the pupils have to copy, later write, later still produce and write the examination-type answer. Remember that the news-sheet is not visible at this stage, they have to recall the information as well as create an answer.

Any grammar point that we feel needs elucidation is dealt with now. We draw attention to agreements of gender and of number; irregularities of verbs or of lexis are pointed out and possibly become the topic of a short grammatical explanation. Then the pupils listen to the ultra fast recording which by now seems quite slow. We could ask the pupils to copy the news but we don't; such an exercise is not really compatible with our aims, we would begrudge losing the time. Those pupils who want to copy the news, and there always are some, stay behind during their break to do so.

Remaining time before break is spent discussing the pupils' own activities during the past weekend or holidays, what they will do next weekend or during the next holidays; we discuss whatever is the most immediate, give them the chance to talk about the things that they want to discuss.

Any visitor to the class is brought forward at this diary time and the children have two minutes in which to satisfy their curiosity. *'Qui est-ce?'* Inspector? Student? *Au pair* girl? Married? Children? Hobbies? They can ask anything they like as long as they ask it in French. The atmosphere is relaxed, we laugh, we joke, we enjoy the stranger before turning to the pupils. *'Qu'est-ce que tu as fait hier soir?'* Similar questions are asked of several pupils, sometimes we get a transformation to the third person - *'Est-ce qu'il est resté à la maison?'* After just a few questions to get the pastness or the futurity established firmly in their heads we call out *'Attaquez!'* Every pupil turns to his friend and they continue the questions and answers among themselves. *'Vendredi soir? dimanche matin?'*

Every adult in the room moves into the nearest small group and joins in. After a few minutes a teacher indicates the end of that activity; if a little time remains before the mid-morning break the pupils write their diary for the week. By the time the bell rings we have all enjoyed over an hour's oral work and every session is different because the content is based upon the events of that day.

We sometimes exploit the team set-up by having two parallel activities before break. One teacher presents the news with the assistant while the other works through a reading comprehension or an aural comprehension passage. Once the pupils have copied the day's new vocabulary they are split quite arbitrarily into two groups and each activity is done twice to the half groups. This ensures some very rapid work for the news presenter because he now has a deadline of some 30 minutes for an exercise which could easily last for an hour. We don't always finish in time, but that doesn't matter in the slightest, we've gained our intensive aural and oral session.

After the break there is individual work in one session and 'optional' lectures in the other half-day. The individual work is language work based upon the pupil's own aims and interests; he may want to write a letter to a pen friend, to cope with a point of grammar that he feels ready to tackle, he may want to plan a visit to a place that interests him. Pupils have the right to go out, two or three together with an adult, to use prepared language in any real situation that they wish to set up. Perhaps a pupil decides to visit a station, a hospital or even the zoo. With his partner he must compile a list of specialised vocabulary that he may be able to use in the context. This list is recorded by a teacher and learned; a diary is written or recorded of what they will do, how they will travel. Once the project has been verified they make the visit. They have to use only French within the team and when they return they have to make a full report of their excursion.

It may seem artificial, to use French in England as a means of communication between speakers of English. In fact there is little shyness or reluctance. I have even had the pleasure of being guided around the Tower of London by a 'Beefeater' who happily waited whilst I translated his English into French for a small group of children whom he thought to be foreign. I also translated their questions to me, in French, back into English for the Beefeater. The atmosphere is almost one of espionage. To move around London using a 'code' is very exciting, and very satisfying for the pupil.

These outings ensure meaningful use of several tenses and of language generally. After all, the same events occur on the streets of London as on the streets of Paris. We too have a metro system, buses, monuments and museums. Sometimes we de-school the whole class. Whitelands College and Kings College are especially helpful in providing a batch of students for such occasions; the pupils make contact with sympathetic French speakers, never more than three pupils to each adult, and the subject acquires a lot of intrinsic interest. French becomes a tool, a means of enjoyment and of real communication.

Interpreter's certificate

Many of the pupils use their private study time to prepare for the Interpreter's certificate with higher grades. The back of each certificate, which is signed and presented by the Headmaster, carries a breakdown of the tasks accomplished. It is apparent to any prospective employer that our certificate, despite its lack of official recognition, is a certificate of real competence in the spoken language. The grade 3 certificate (Table 4) has only one written task out of a total of eight. Grades 2 and 1 carry rather higher levels of written work. The materials for private study are available. Each booklet is accompanied by a cassette recorded by a native speaker so that accurate models can be heard if necessary. The pupils have free access to cassette players for private study. Of course there are at least three adults moving constantly around the dozen or so little groups that form, so plenty of help is available to an individual. Any adult, teacher or visitor, can give the child a pass in any of the tests which can be taken at any time and in any order.

On the second half-day of each week, the optional lectures follow the break. Each of the three adults and sometimes a visitor, prepares a short lecture upon a grammar point or on a topic. Points of grammar are chosen almost arbitrarily, we have no belief in a linear and cumulative approach. Teachers choose topics that appeal to them from prepared lists.

These lecturettes may last for only five minutes, they could last for an hour. Each teacher makes use of the other members of the team as he feels fit. Perhaps he does the whole lecture alone, perhaps he organises several smaller groups. It is his decision. Our team-teaching set-up allows him a choice of presentations.

Any pupil who feels that a lecture is concerned with material that he already knows may drop out at this point and continue with his own project. He will have a brief test from one of the teachers to ensure that he really does have an adequate command of the item being taught. Because almost every lecture is automatically repeated in a different form by a different teacher some weeks later for purposes of revision and in order to cope with absences, the drop-out rate varies. There may be only one or two who opt out, there may be two-thirds of the class. Certainly those who stay know that they need what is being offered and so they pay attention. The bell that signals the end of our half-day is an interruption. Often batches of pupils work through their lunch hour upon their interpreter course materials.

We make fairly frequent journeys to Normandy. We are fortunate in having a school minibus; we sleep in sleeping bags on the night ferry to Le Havre. By travelling on a Thursday evening and returning on a Monday night we miss very little schooling in other subjects because fourth year French is timetabled for Friday mornings and Monday afternoons for this very purpose. Most of our pupils make at least one trip to France; a Paris journey, made by train, enables us to take a larger group. Our pupils are not rich. On the contrary the area is largely deprived, but parents are eager to invest in their child's education and most manage to afford at least a long weekend. Grants are obtainable for the really needy family. In addition to going to France we entertain our corresponding school pupils when they make their short visit to London. Journeys are not possible in the fifth year because it would be unfair to cause pupils to miss other subjects in this final year before examinations.

An assessment

We have not found the Holy Grail. This is not an attempt to present our system as the answer to everyone's problems. It is a happy compromise between what the languages department would really like and the constraints of a school and its timetable. Our methods were tailored to suit the range of personalities within our team.

Our problems are small but should be aired. Certainly we do not find mixed ability teaching onerous but would suggest that mixed motivation causes the real troubles. A non-motivated child who embarks upon an intensive course quickly becomes disenchanted. The very nature of pre-examination options in the upper school means that he often cannot be moved to another subject. We have to try to re-kindle enthusiasm, offer success, praise and encouragement, and as a last resort prevent his discontent from spreading to others. Fortunately our sampler course in the final weeks of the third year eliminates most of such pupils.

The other problem child is the extrinsically motivated pupil - the examination hunter. Several of these have expressed doubts to me about the relevance of the fourth year language course. Fortunately such pupils usually have the intelligence to accept that written accuracy - the skill required in examinations - can only follow logically from an ability to speak easily and accurately. They can then be induced to participate more fully in oral work. Certainly the backwash of public examinations is most unfortunate.[21] They do little to measure the communicative skills that we nurture and reward. I do not think that this is entirely the fault of the examination boards. Many teachers themselves would probably resist attempts to remove essay-writing, dictation and the like. The fact remains that during the fifth year we have to teach the children the pitfalls of such tests; we teach them manipulation of written questions and answers upon passages of French of the sort that few of them will ever be likely to meet again once they have left school. Consequently we introduce practices which we see as dysfunctional at the least, harmful at the worst. Much more English is introduced in order to talk about language; much of the sense of fun, of meaningful use of language has to be sacrificed in order to prepare children for the examinations.

We are assessing our own work as rigorously as possible. Two neighbouring schools have generously allowed us to use them as controls. It will be 1980 before we get a cohort that is purely the product of our complete system as outlined here; present cohorts are 'polluted' in their language-learning history as a result of the creation of the school in 1974 from an amalgamation of several different secondary schools. Measures to date can only be interpreted with extreme caution but it would appear that, despite much less contact time, by the time a pupil is mid-way through the first year of the language-bath, he is superior in aural comprehension and in oral fluency as judged by native-speakers. The most staggering difference is in motivation. Language-bath pupils have significantly more positive attitudes to the language and the culture.[22] We are very hopeful that for the future cohorts our pupils will equal the control schools in oral and aural skills by the beginning of the fourth year, despite having received a total of 8,400 minutes of French as compared to 21,000 minutes in the control schools. We hope to make good deficiencies in reading and writing and grammatical awareness by the end of the fourth year. Certainly our pupils should be significantly advantaged by this time in their fluency and in their readiness to open and sustain intelligent conversation with strange adults from the target community.[23]

Table 1

Year	*Number of lessons weekly*	*Content*
1	1 double	Italian/European studies
2	1 double	German studies
3	3 doubles	French
4	4 doubles and/or 2 doubles	French German
5	4 doubles and/or 3 doubles	French German

NB Only the more gifted linguist can take French and German, partly because of the short time available for German, partly because in order to do German he has to be withdrawn from one double period of French each week.

Table 2: The introductory third year: the modules

Week	*Teacher*			
	A	*B*	*C*	*D*
1 2 3 4	Common core — no rotation			Numbers, time, prices Packaging food Asking way
	Rotation weekly			
5 6 7 8	Cognates with Un - une - des Le - la - les	Myself Question and answer	Menus	Travel situations
9 10 11 12	Dates - Years More cognates Pronunciation practice	Family/home Mon - ma - mes	Shops - shopping	Hotel booking etc
13 14 15 16	News Essential vocabulary (team-taught)	Diary Immediate future	Meals	Camping, holidays sea/country

17	Tests for Interpreter's certificate grade 5		
18 19 20 21	(Team-taught A + B) News and diaries - immediate future	Weather	Prepositions in town, cross-roads etc
22 23 24 25	News and diaries (Past)	School timetable	Towns - regions north, south etc
26 27 28 29 30	News and diaries (Past)	Asking questions	Paris Monuments Metro
31 32	Interpreter's certificate tests - grades 5 and 4 Oral, aural comprehension and reading comprehension tests		
33 to 40	Option groups Language continuation or European studies - Team-taught/rotation		

Table 3

	Traditional timetable		*AMR timetable*	
Year	*Periods weekly*	*Annually*	*Periods weekly*	*Annually*
Pre-option				
1	5	200	2	80
2	5	200	2	80
3	5	200	6	240
Pre-option total		600		400
Post-option				
4	5	200	8	320
5	5	200	8	320
Post-option total	10	400	16	640
Grand total		1,000		1,040

Table 4: Interpreter's certificate grade 3

1. Carry out a phone assignment chosen by the examiner from the telephone situation booklet. (A range of tests have to be practised, for example: telephone and book a boat for a river cruise for forty people, ensure that you have a microphone, bar and toilets aboard. How much?)
2. Ask for and direct people to all main places of interest in town.
3. Be able to shop for all foodstuffs (pupils have to know that a bottle of wine is always a litre, that cent grammes is approximately a quarter pound etc).
4. Interpret most of a French menu - order a meal for four persons.
5. Be able to survive in any place of travel, check times of arrival, departure, get reservations etc.
6. Read three simple books, be able orally to sum up the stories in any tense and answer questions upon them.
7. Talk about your daily life, habitual actions, past actions, future activities and hopes.
8. Write a long letter in your own time, tell us all about yourself and your life. Get it checked and make as many attempts as you like but produce a final perfect version.

Appendix

A fictitious news item as edited for different age groups.

Third year pupils (after two terms of French)

Monsieur CARTER, le Président des Etats-Unis, a dîné hier soir avec Mr CALLAGHAN

Fourth year pupils (after five terms of French)

Le Président des Etats-Unis est arrivé à Londres hier soir. Après la réception officielle, il est allé à Downing Street, où il a dîné avec le Premier Ministre. Il va repartir pour Bruxelles après-demain.

Fifth year pupils (after eight terms of French)

Le Président des Etats-Unis est arrivé à Heathrow à 17h30 hier soir. Après avoir inspecté la garde d'honneur, il a été conduit chez le Premier

Ministre, où les deux hommes ont discuté la crise économique en dînant. Après-demain, il repartira pour Bruxelles où il rencontrera les ministres du Marché Commun.

References

17 For a further account of the organisational changes at AMR see Cross, D, 'Organisational changes in foreign language teaching' *Modern Languages*, 58,2, 1977.

18 'Time allowance and time distribution. Carroll's long-standing insistence on explaining attainment in a foreign language as 'a matter of time spent learning' has been repeatedly confirmed in recent studies. cf Stern, H H and A Weinrib, 'Foreign languages for younger children: trends and assessment', *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts,* 10, 1, January 1977.

19 Wilkins, D A *Second language learning and teaching* Arnold, 1974. Chapter 4. Belyayev, B V *The psychology of teaching foreign languages* Pergamon Press, 1963. p. 224 ff.

20 Many linguists feel that language learning best takes place when the learner's attention is focussed upon the meaning rather than upon the form. Certainly the well-recorded experiments in bilingual education in Canada would support such a view. Activity too provides extra-linguistic clues. Macnamara, J 'Comparison between first-and second-language learning' *Die Neueren Sprachen,* Berlin, 25, 2, 1976.

21 The gap between examination requirements and actual language-use is coming increasingly under attack. cf Emmans, K, E Hawkins and A Westoby *Foreign languages in industry and commerce* Language Teaching Centre, University of York, 1974; Page, B, 'An alternative to sixteen-plus' *Modern Languages*, 55, 2, 1974; Harding, A, and B Page 'An alternative model for modern language examinations' *AVLA Journal*, 12, 3, 1974.

22 One of the main conclusions drawn from the Canadian experiments is that integrative motivation is a prime factor in language-learning success. Lambert, W E, G R Tucker and A d'Anglejan 'Cognitive and attitudinal consequences of bilingual schooling: the St Lambert project through grade five' *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 65, 3, 1973.

23 See also Cross, D, 'The intensive language course at Archbishop Michael Ramsey School' *Modern Languages*, 58, 4, 1977.

Part three: Intensive courses at external centres

8. Intensive Russian, York

David Rix

The major difficulty facing teachers of Russian consists in finding an opportunity to teach their subject within the secondary school curriculum. Many schools do not make any provision for Russian at all. It is not the intention of this article to extol the merits of Russian, nor to make any extravagant claims for expansion. On the other hand, where there are intelligent and motivated pupils who wish to learn Russian, who would suggest that they must be denied the opportunity?

In those schools where Russian is taught, a fortunate teacher may have a class of twelve year-old beginners, and be able to exploit the Nuffield and Schools Council Russian courses, or similar materials, over a four-year course to age sixteen. Others may have the chance to introduce Russian as a third or fourth form option. In the largest number of schools where Russian exists however, it is not taught below the sixth form.

In the latter case both practical and methodological problems arise. Classes are usually small, and resources may be slender. Teaching is clearly uneconomic in terms of staff time. The purchase of expensive audio-visual materials may be considered equally uneconomic, or just not on. Time is relatively short. What kind of course can be provided, and what objectives are appropriate, in the time available? Is it feasible to embark on a fully skill-based course and to pursue this to useful and worthwhile levels of achievement in all four skills, together with the educational experience of studying cultural aspects of life in the USSR? Or is it inevitable that the constraints of time and resources must compel the teacher of Russian to fall back on more formal methods, and base the course on the cheapest grammar textbook available?

In the case of Russian, then, the particular problems are to ensure that all pupils in secondary schools who wish to study Russian are able to do so, and to ensure that their course of study provides as full a linguistic and educational experience as is possible in the time available. Intensive teaching cannot provide a complete and universal answer to these two problems, but it can certainly make a significant and useful contribution.

For example, in the City of York the majority of schools are unable to make any provision for Russian. The creation of the York inter-schools Russian course has ensured that at least a proportion of pupils in the city have had an opportunity to learn Russian. Over five years the course has also provided some evidence of the levels of performance which able sixth form beginners can achieve in individual language skills on a short course of study, and the extent to which intensive methods of teaching may contribute to their proficiency.

The York course is extra-curricular and wholly voluntary. It is offered to first-year sixth form pupils in half a dozen local schools, and usually attracts from about a dozen up to twenty takers. The pupils are very able, but are not necessarily specialist linguists. They will all have had some previous language learning experience in French and/or German, but about half of the group will be studying science subjects for their 'A' levels. They are naturally highly motivated to learn Russian, since they have themselves chosen to study the language as an additional activity after school hours. Twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays they walk or cycle, come rain or come shine, to the centre of the city and have their lesson in the Teachers' Language Centre from approximately 4.30 - 6.00 pm, then go home to their tea and 'A' level homework. I admire their courage and stamina, and try hard never to give them a boring lesson.

The course itself is built more on the lines of an informal and relaxed language learning club, rather than formal class instruction. The provision of small, pleasant and comfortable rooms in the Centre helps this considerably. Equipment is readily available, the North Yorkshire LEA provides a grant for the purchase of books, and I can draw upon my own stock of visuals and tape recordings at the University.

The scheme therefore brings together from individual schools a viable group of able and motivated pupils, creates pleasant and sociable conditions in which they can learn, and makes rational and economic use of resources. The main consideration is to make the most of the limited amount of time available, and to devise the right kind of course appropriate to the group's abilities and expectations.

In one sense the whole of the York course is intensive, in that the group follows a fully skill-orientated course to 'O' level standard in one year, with some additional time for preparation for specific requirements of the examination, which they take in November of the fourth term.

Initially, however, they have a 'total immersion' type of introductory intensive course. This takes place in September, just before the start of the school term, and lasts for a minimum of three days and up to a week. It gives the group a concentrated spell of perhaps fifteen to twenty hours of almost exclusively aural-oral work before the after-school sessions begin, and plays a key part in the success of the course as a whole.

The aim of the intensive introduction is not to cover a large quantity of language in a very short time. Obviously pupils will learn quite a lot of spoken Russian in three to five days which they might take several weeks to cover in a normal school situation. The main benefit of the intensive introduction, however, consists in the concentrated bathe in the sounds of Russian provided by continuous aural-oral practice of a carefully selected and sequenced amount of material. The first day's bathe in the new sounds, and the production of those sounds, is naturally a shock to the brain and vocal apparatus. The second day, for some pupils, may be even harder. By the third day, with two nights' sleep in between, something has clearly happened. Quite exactly what has happenend, and how, I do not know, but the result is obvious: the pupils have adjusted, 'tuned in' to the sounds of Russian to an extent which is very difficult to achieve with beginners through normal spaced lessons in school. They have crashed through the sound barrier. Their pronunciation and intonation are largely shaped for the duration of the course. Their aural perception is attuned, and they are psychologically adjusted to learning principally through their ears. Success in subsequent development of listening comprehension and speaking is largely dependent on this.

The initial aural-oral immersion also greatly contributes to the pace at which pupils can proceed in all four skills during the following twice-weekly sessions after school. The nature of the course itself generates a good deal of momentum and impetus. Pupils have got off to a good, fast start, and this sets the pace for the sessions after school. A more significant point is that the bank of language acquired by intensive aural-oral work during the three to five days provides a substantial foundation for the introduction of recognition reading, and subsequently rapid extensive reading, at earlier points in the course than would otherwise be possible.

The intensive oral introduction therefore greatly facilitates compression of the staging of skills, and enables pupils to break into the language and begin to perform in all four areas of comprehension, speaking, reading and writing much earlier. For a short course of study with contact tuition twice a week this is obviously important.

The intensive introduction also makes a significant contribution to the course as a whole in consolidating pupils' motivation to learn Russian. Initial motivation or curiosity is already there. The introductory course is clearly a novel and exciting experience for pupils, and the demands of intensive learning by aural-oral methods presents quite a challenge. During the first days it is essential not only to stimulate interest, but to create a real feeling of achievement and success. This stems more from the pupils' appreciation of what they can actually say in the language, in practical contexts, in the first couple of days, rather than from the amount of ground covered. If within the first ten minutes they can introduce themselves to each other in Russian, and through the morning carry out a series of practical conversational exchanges with their partners, they may get the notion that Russian is a real, living language, and perhaps not necessarily as difficult and inaccessible as it is sometimes reputed to be.

On the other hand, one or two pupils may drop out during the intensive course. They may not take to Russian as readily as others, or may feel that the demands of the course are too much for them. The intensive introduction gives them the chance to sample the language and to bow out gracefully at an earlier point if they wish. For the rest, I know that by the end of the three to five days of the intensive introduction I have a cohesive group who can stand the pace and will stay with me for the full year's course. A group which is no longer a collection of individual pupils from different schools, but a working unit which is geared to learning effectively. Friendly and cooperative working relationships have been established: in the atmosphere of an intensive oral introduction I get to know the pupils, and they each other, very well and very quickly. They have largely shed their natural inhibitions. They are familiar with my approach and methods. They are accustomed to a measure of independence in learning, and willing to participate actively and take the initiative in practice in pairs or small groups, and to help each other. Their ability to absorb spoken Russian has given them confidence, and the material covered provides a foundation for further rapid progress in the after-school lessons.

These factors, ie rapid and effective completion of basic groundwork and acclimatisation of the group to the learning process, represent the most significant contributions of the intensive introduction, rather than any prodigious or spectacular results. Great care, in fact, needs to be taken to ensure that young minds, however able and receptive, are not overtaxed or saturated, since this would obviously be completely counter-productive. Careful sequencing and re-working of the material, variation of methods and pace, and the inclusion of relaxed activities and games are even more important for an intensive course than for normal class lessons.

The intensive introduction may get pupils off to a good, fast, confident start, but the bulk of the task of taking them on to worthwhile levels of proficiency in all four skills, in a year, and with two contact lessons a week, still remains. This entails a radically different approach to materials and methods.

The development of language skills essentially requires practice, and this, in turn requires time and patience. The development of skill in listening and speaking, particularly, demands a large amount of carefully graded and sequenced practice, revision, and fusion of individual teaching points. Building up skill in reading must not be unduly hurried, and developing rapid extensive reading to a rewarding and pleasurable level takes time. The 'O' level examination requirements for writing also have to be met. The study of Russian language must not be completely divorced from study of the USSR as a country, and time must be found for this.

The only way to accommodate all these requirements within the limited amount of time available is to begin by careful and clear definition of specific aims and objectives for each skill, and to discriminate between the areas of language most relevant to each skill.

In the case of the productive skill of speaking, for example, it is necessary to determine in advance the larger part of what pupils will be able to say by the end of the course, in which practical situations or on which topics of personal conversation. It is then possible to concentrate intensive oral practice almost exclusively on these areas, and consciously to eliminate other superflous material. Practice or knowledge of other linguistic points relevant to extensive listening or reading comprehension, but not to oral production, may then be treated differently and separately.

This naturally presupposes the provision of teaching materials clearly designed for the development of individual skills, and also a progression and sequencing of teaching points rather different from that usually found in many conventional school course books. For a short skill-based course, general coverage of the language by a gradual progression through comprehensive grammatical categories, whether by formal instruction or audio-visual methods, is just not practicable. The pace is too slow, and it takes too long to arrive at the eventual terminal objectives for each skill.

Grammar has to be fragmented, and individual points singled out for particular purposes. Essential speech structures have to be slotted in with particular situations and topics, in an appropriate sequence, with fuller and more systematic knowledge of the particular area of grammar provided later for the sake of reading, as necessary. In the case of speaking, for example, some verbs, or especially particular forms of verbs, then become much more equal than others, and many may be disregarded as quite irrelevant to the aims defined for speaking. With such a discriminating approach it is then possible to break through the wider areas of tense and aspect in Russian more quickly and easily. During the intensive introduction pupils will use past, as well as present, tense forms of selected verbs. By the end of the first term they will have used a much larger selection of verbs in all tenses (but not, of course, all tense forms of each individual verb). Breaking out of the straitjacket imposed by prolonged linear treatment of verbs, tense by tense, gives much more freedom of manoeuvre, and enables pupils to head more directly and rapidly towards the terminal objectives. This does not mean that I throw everything at them at once. On the contrary, the progression and rate of introduction of new points are still very carefully sequenced and graded. In any case, the discriminating approach to grammar probably promotes facility as much as it does speed.

There is not, of course, a wide selection of coursebooks which will meet the needs of this type of rapid, short course. During term one of the York course I produce my own material for oral presentation and practice of new teaching points, and draw upon a Soviet course, *Russian for everybody*, for supporting texts, dialogues and first extensive readers. This course is a little dull, but it is based on a functional approach to language learning, discriminates clearly between skills, and the language content most nearly matches my requirements. When language content is suitable it is not difficult to improve methods, and to devise more interesting forms of practice. If the language content is not appropriate to your aims, then, of course, you have no hope of winning. Selective use of about the first fifteen lessons of this course, plus my own material, adequately takes the group to the point where they can break into Stage 4 of *Vperyod*, the Schools Council Russian course, at the beginning of Term 2. I then have a good range of tape recordings, texts, dialogues and readers which can be adapted relatively easily to a fast course. Completion of Stage 4, plus selective use of some of the material from Stage 5, will take pupils to levels of proficiency where they can cope readily with 'O' level tests in speaking, and listening or reading comprehension. A little more attention given to narrative written composition towards the end of the course will ensure reasonable preparation for the written paper.

A short, rapid course naturally also involves careful consideration of the allocation of time and the methods used for the development of each skill.

During the sessions after school I give the bulk of practice time to listening, speaking and intensive reading. Towards the end of term one, the group can begin to tackle extensive silent reading, and thereafter I give them one reading homework and one short written homework each week. When they reach Stage 4 of *Vperyod* pupils can read a wider variety of fiction and articles on aspects of the USSR. Since the readers are carefully designed and graded expressly for the purposes of extensive reading, I can safely allow pupils to read them at their own individual pace, and the one, regular weekly homework takes care of this area. Written work in the early stages is confined to worksheets, written exercises and dialogues which serve to consolidate oral work in class. As the pupils' oral ability expands, more creative writing of dialogues and informal letters is then developed.

Since the largely aural-oral sessions after school last for approximately an hour and a half, a considerable variety of activities and teaching/learning techniques has to be used in the lessons. The pupils come from a full day's work in school, and it is important to get them involved and actually doing something quickly. I therefore try not to talk at them too much, and the lessons are constructed as short, intensive spells of teacher-centred presentation and practice, followed by longer periods of practice in pairs or small groups. My function as the teacher is therefore to put across the new teaching points, using the tape recordings, role-playing or oral drill techniques, set up the situation or pattern to be practised, and then allow the group to get on with it. This helps to give all pupils the maximum opportunity to practise speaking during the lesson, allows them to initiate conversational exchanges rather than respond continually to a teacher, and makes practice more natural, informal, relaxed and enjoyable. Pupils obviously like it, and seem to learn more effectively in this way. I also like it, since it economises on my voice and energy, and allows me to pace myself through the lesson (I too have come from a day's work.) It is not difficult to move around the group to listen, correct and encourage. I obviously cannot hear and correct every single mistake made, but with thorough preparation of the practice there should not be too many, and the gradual development of 'peripheral hearing' should detect anything that essentially needs correction. Uncorrected minor errors seem a small price to pay for the amount of energy and work these forms of practice can generate.

Play and fun in lessons are also helpful in promoting a relaxed, club atmosphere, and language learning games can, of course, be very effective as a teaching device. They tend to consume time, but I think most pupils value enjoyment of lessons as highly as progress towards an 'O' level examination.

In terms of 'O' level results the customers are usually satisfied, and I hope that all pupils have profited from a useful educational experience in completing the course. In each group there are usually a few who discover a particular inclination and ability for Russian, and wish to continue their studies further. This year there are three girls who wish to continue to study Russian at university as their subsidiary language. But for the course, they would have had no opportunity to sample Russian and discover their flair for the language. Some manage to get to the USSR and use their language. Three of the present group have been on a bus trip through Europe to Odessa. One boy is aiming for the civil service and perhaps a qualification in Russian, with his French and German, will be of some use. The course may possibly be of some future benefit to those in the group studying science, if they subsequently need or wish to develop a specialist reading knowledge in their particular field. And if their Russian is of no practical use to them whatsoever, I hope at least that they enjoyed the course.

Apart from that, the course at least helps to fill a gap in educational provision locally, and might perhaps be of some relevance to other areas where it is difficult to establish Russian in the schools. Perhaps similar courses might be held in teachers' centres for a group of schools in a city area, or perhaps neighbouring schools might find it possible to collaborate in sharing staff and resources in order to have more viable groups of pupils for minority subjects. Could not individual teachers with small groups of pupils cooperate in providing intensive introductory or booster courses jointly for their pupils?

At least one very optimistic conclusion may be drawn from the York course, and that is: that the relative lack of time is not an insuperable obstacle to the provision of a full and balanced course. Successive groups of sixth-formers have shown me that, with their ability and motivation, and given adequate provision of resources and appropriate teaching materials, in just over one year, they can reach very worthwhile standards of proficiency in all skills in Russian, which are comparable to those obtained in French and German by younger beginners over five years. The problem is one of rational organisation of resources to provide the opportunity for them to do it.

9. A French remedial course, York

Bryan Howson

The aims of this course, which has been held in January each year for the last six years, are two-fold.

Aware of the problem of underachievement by relatively able fifth-formers in French, staff at the Language Teaching Centre at York arranged the course to offer some support to colleagues in local schools who are teaching such pupils.

The intention is quite unashamedly to try and improve their chances of obtaining a pass grade in the summer examination - GCE or CSE - by discovering during these five days the gaps which exist in the pupils' knowledge of French, and covering those areas by intensive teaching and also by careful preparation of those types of language activity by which pupils will be tested in their examination. The subsidiary motive from the Centre's point of view is to offer to the sixteen or so postgraduate students, who are following the one-year PGCE course (French), experience of intensive teaching and close contact with small groups of pupils, which is invaluable in building up their awareness of the learning problems of pupils studying French.

These PGCE students are the teachers of the course, closely supervised by the course director, who is a full-time tutor in the Centre.

All of them have French as the main subject of their degree; they have a high level of commitment to language teaching and are roughly half-way through their year of professional training. Although they have not at the time of the course undertaken any period of formal teaching practice in schools, the first term of their course is organised so that each student does have an opportunity each week to observe a number of practising teachers in the classroom and occasionally to contribute to the teaching by taking over a section of the class.

The pupils are drawn from the dozen or so secondary schools in and around York, each school sending seven or eight fifth-formers. The selection of pupils to attend is undertaken mainly by the teachers in the schools according to criteria suggested by the Centre. The kind of pupil the course is intended to help is not one who is already doing well in French and who is thought to be able to pass the summer examination without too much difficulty. Nor are we looking for the pupil whose performance in the subject has been consistently bad in spite of continuous and adequate teaching.

The pupils we ask for are the borderline candidates whom the teachers consider in danger of failing, not through laziness or lack of native ability but for reasons outside their control. They may have had periods of absence from school and have missed part of their course; some may have transferred from one school to another and lost momentum in the subject; some may have had a variety of teachers and teaching materials and become confused; others may have had no teacher at all for certain periods because of staff shortages. They are in short those who, given their level of intelligence and general ability, ought to be doing better than they are at this crucial period in their five year course.

The dates of the course, which lasts for five full days, are always arranged so that the pupils give up two or three days of their Christmas holiday - a token of their serious intent. The course is very demanding and the pupils must start out with the understanding that they will work hard to gain the maximum advantage from their time in the Centre. Since they are all volunteers - no-one is compelled by their school to attend - pupils do work extremely hard. During this week they spend 25 hours or more on their French, the equivalent in school time of almost a term of French for some of them.

Before the course begins, class teachers of the pupils selected are asked to provide certain information to help in the allocation of pupils to their groups. An essential factor here is the particular syllabus which they are following at school and the nature of the examination for which they are preparing. The teacher is asked to comment briefly on the pupil's background in French, where weakness appears to lie and on attitudes to the subject. Each pupil is also asked to describe as well as he can where he thinks he is weak and what aspects of the subject need revision. Most find this difficult to do. Their perceptions about their own shortcomings are frequently vague and they often settle for a very short description of their problem - 'can't speak French' or 'don't understand the grammar'. More detailed information about the pupils' knowledge of French is provided by their performance on the short diagnostic test - based on Percival's *Standardised grammar test* - which is given on the first morning of the course.

Once a profile of each pupil has been established using all these sources of information, eight groups of approximately ten pupils are formed, each with two student-teachers. Each group works together for several hours on that first day. Once the teachers have met their group and formed a first-hand impression of their ability and problems, a further breakdown into groups takes place, so that for the rest of the course each teacher works with the same group of six, five or four pupils. No group exceeds six. The aim is to arrive as far as possible at working groups which are relatively homogeneous.

The one feature of the course which initially caused some anxiety among practising teachers was the use of student-teachers as tutors on such an intensive course. It is true that the graduates so employed have very little experience of working with pupils of this age and they are still in the process of learning their craft. This lack of experience is balanced, however, by the fact that they are all highly competent speakers of French and all approach this work with great enthusiasm and sympathy for the learner. They are working with small groups of pupils which reduces the problem of class management they will later face with classes of 25 or more. Nearly all have spent a year in France working as assistants in secondary schools and all have had several hours of experience of small groups in York secondary schools during their first term at the Language Teaching Centre. Before the course they have a number of detailed briefing sessions with the course director who will later supervise the work of each group and be constantly available for advice and help.

It must be noted that these student-teachers receive no payment for the hard work they do. The cost of their week's additional residence in York is reimbursed, as are their travel expenses to the Centre from their homes.

No charge is made to schools for the course, although pupils who attend are asked to pay £1 towards the cost of postage and materials.

During the morning session, from 9.30 to 12.30, the pupils work with their teacher with only a short break of fifteen minutes for a mid-morning drink.

Being in such small groups allows pupils very little opportunity to opt out and demands a great deal of concentration.

The afternoon session from 13.30 to 15.30 is arranged somewhat differently. Under the supervision of five teachers who are available for explanation and help where it is needed, pupils work on assignments prepared and set for them by their group teacher. During this session they are consolidating in written work the activities of the morning. This work is collected and marked by the responsible group teacher and is ready for discussion and follow-up teaching on the following day. During the afternoon pupils may also spend some time in the language laboratory working on pre-recorded material.

Although the laboratory is also available for each group for an hour in the morning, group leaders are not obliged to use it with their pupils. The near individual tuition which the latter are getting during that session is a much better use of the time.

Since the course has a clearly defined target - the CSE or GCE examination - the type of materials used by the groups is equally well defined. For each day of the course the pupil receives a package which consists of a number of typical language tasks from the examining board whose examination he will take later in the year. The exercises cover the essential areas of comprehension (aural and written), composition (from pictures or on a written topic), translation (into English), and oral work (the 100 questions-type syllabus or more general questions, topics and role-play). Each daily package also revises certain key areas of grammar - tenses, for example, or pronouns - with more exercises to practise these. The material pre-recorded each day in the language laboratory also supports this revision and examination practice.

The teacher works through this material with his group, constantly on the look-out for areas in which pupils are weak. In one sense the exercises serve as a basis on which to diagnose gaps in the pupils' knowledge. The teacher takes each point of difficulty which is shown by how a pupil deals with a particular task and teaches on that point by explanation, by further example and exercise, and by exploitation in conversation practice.

Everyone is encouraged to use French as much as possible, although there is no hesitation about using English to explain a point of meaning or grammar quickly and efficiently. For some pupils much of this may be only valuable revision but it is clear that many others have never really understood the form and use of some essential structures. The pupils are constantly urged to ask questions, however basic, when they are in doubt and to stop the teacher immediately when they cannot understand.

In the informal, relaxed atmosphere of the small group with the good relationship which develops between the pupils and the student-teacher, there is the opportunity for a frank admission of ignorance and pupils feel able to ask questions which too often go unasked in the classroom before a critical audience of 30 or more.

It is not easy to assess accurately the precise effect of this course on the subsequent performance of the fifth-formers who attend. They still have after all another term and a half to go before the examination. (The reason for holding the course so early in the Easter term is that in many schools the 'mock' examination takes place early in the year and entry to the summer exam is sometimes dependent on a pupil's satisfactory performance in the school test.)

It would therefore be unreasonable and certainly tactless of those involved in this teaching to claim credit for the success of any pupil in the actual examination. However, feedback from pupils during the course and later, as well as from teachers in local schools indicates clearly a great deal of satisfaction with the work that the student-teachers do with these pupils. Often it is reported that pupils approach the subject with a renewed confidence in their ability to learn and are thus much better able to take advantage of the teaching in the school during the subsequent three or four months. The gain from the student-teachers' point of view is undeniable. They, too, gain confidence from this close contact with fifth year pupils as well as valuable experience of the kinds of problems which they will have to anticipate as serving teachers. One other measure of the success of the course is that each year has seen an increase in the number of schools and pupils who wish to participate. To raise the number of fifth-formers who attend, however, would adversely affect the close relationship which the teacher has with his or her small group of pupils and upon which the success of this course undoubtedly depends.

10. Reciprocal French, York

Mary Dalwood

For six years now the Language Teaching Centre at the University of York has organised a fortnight's intensive course in July for equal numbers of French and English seventeen-year olds - a 'reciprocal' course in that participants, paired off, act on alternate days as learner and as native informant-cum-teacher. The principle had already been shown to work with teachers of languages, English and Spanish, English and French; the first pilot run with school pupils confirmed that much younger learners could teach each other in the same way.

The economy of this teaching arrangement is what first commends it. Sixteen prospective 'A' level candidates want to improve their French, and as many *bacheliers en herbe* their English. Given this high motivation and a reasonably mature sense of responsibility, such students have an enormous contribution to make to each other's progress. Practical considerations make a short intensive course the best way of setting up the project and point to July as a favourable moment in the school year, when the French are on holiday and the English summer term is drawing to its close. The intensive course sharpens the sixth-former's enthusiasm at a time when attention to school work is flagging and makes a free gift to his French studies of 30 or 40 hours of extra, tailor-made work. The French participants in this friendly enterprise feel they are getting good value for money from their English trip. Of course, a return visit by the English is the ideal follow-up, and that we tried one Easter. Factors militating against it, though, are the administrative problems on the French side, the fatigue of French pupils after the spring term, for whom two clear weeks of holiday are essential, and these days, the high cost for English pupils.

Our English students, then, are proven good achievers in French. What is more, since the demand exceeds the places available, we ask the school staff who normally teach them to nominate the more sociable, friendly and articulate applicants, and we try for equal numbers of boys and girls. The French are more or less self-selected through the good offices of one or two French teachers of English who are kind enough to act as go-betweens; we do stipulate an age range of sixteen to seventeen, and ask for people who have done English as a first foreign language for six years. Older students may not only be too good at English, but also too adult in outlook to mix well with the group. Students who are younger may not shoulder their responsibilities well enough.

As far as possible, each French student stays with the family of an English student, though the two will not necessarily be working together. The arrangement makes it possible for the English to pay a tuition fee, since the current rate for board and lodging at York earns the host family a small profit. The French pay the same tuition fee. By and large these arrangements have suited everybody, barring minor problems: an unfriendly English student or a French student who treats the place as a hotel, can be talked round if the tutors find out early enough. The pairing of partners for work can be more sensitively arranged, and for the first week it is best, we have found, for one of the tutors to draw up lists day by day so that each participant gets to know five other people. Thereafter free choice can be allowed if the students wish it.

It is appropriate to speak first of the relationships between individuals, since the social aspect turned out to be enormously important. Most of the French, from different schools, had made the long journey from eastern France together, and that was a bond; the English had to get to know each other,though we had already brought them together two or three weeks before, ostensibly to prepare them for their role as teachers. We worked in groups of eight and sixteen as well as in pairs, and the four tutors, of both nationalities, of both sexes and more or less bilingual, came to know the students pretty well. Numbers are important, too. The smallest viable course might cater for twelve in all, whereas a group of 36 would be barely manageable. Between twenty and 32 make a party small enough to be cohesive and large enough to generate an *esprit de corps*. In a nutshell, here were two sets of young people who instantly began to know and like each other through working together and enjoying themselves together. Within the framework set up for them and thanks to it they found ways of putting across in one or other language everything they wanted to say.

The ten working days are planned in advance. On Day 1 everybody talks French except for target language sessions, on Day 2 English, and so on alternately. Each day begins with one and a half hours of target language work in groups of eight with a native tutor : general conversation, listening comprehension from tape, language laboratory work, oral work on grammar points. Then comes work in pairs on the text of the day, in English on English days, in French on French days. The task: to read through the text with the partner, correcting pronunciation, explaining difficult parts, eliciting answers to comprehension questions, discussing the issues raised. We hand out the text immediately after the first target language session, allowing no time for a break, but the students move about, find their own corner to work in and go off to lunch independently when the work is completed. The tutors circulate to see how the work is progressing. A second target language session of 30 minutes after lunch is devoted to pronunciation in groups of eight with the native tutor. Next comes a session on the text of the day in mixed language groups of sixteen, when the questions on language and subject matter are answered fluently by the L2 speakers, thanks to the morning's preparation. A general discussion is usually sparked off, in the language of the day, and has to be firmly and sensitively chaired by the tutors. The day ends with some kind of plenary session or a different activity in groups of sixteen - formal teaching, informal activities or a film show. This is a heavy timetable, but the work is meant to feel as well as be intensive. Occasional changes in the routine and an afternoon off on Day 7 or 8 bring relief.

The working tool for each student is his language notebook. He provides it and puts down every item that crops up in private conversation or in class. Words are to be quoted in context, cognates, synonyms and antonyms to be listed, definitions preferred to translations, and entries to be grouped under titles. The notebooks are called in now and then for assessment, credit being given for completeness, accuracy and clear layout. Students take the point that they cannot possibly remember all the new vocabulary and structures without this support, and it does indeed constitute a record of the work done.

We have always held a *post-mortem* at the end of the course, English tutors with English groups, French with French. We issue a questionnaire asking for ratings and comments on each piece of work or activity and invite the students to fill it in *independently* - discussion comes later. The answers are very revealing and help us greatly to make modifications here and there. This year we resolved to devote the last half-hour of Week 1 to an interim questionnaire, and this was even more useful for the current course. In addition to its feedback function, evaluation requires from the students an effort of memory, forcing them to put the project in perspective and review it as a whole.

Teachers taken by the idea of a reciprocal course ask how it is set up and above all, what teaching materials are used. Like most school journeys and exchanges, it needs to be thought about at the very beginning of the school year, or earlier. Dates must be settled and publicity must go out to potential participants before Christmas, and provisional commitments asked for during the spring term. Definitive applications and deposits need to be received early in the summer term. Meanwhile the course organiser is looking for tutors, not among full-time teachers, who would need superhuman stamina to take on a fortnight's intensive teaching in July even if their administrative commitments left them enough time, but rather among the foreign language assistants employed by the authority and prospective foreign language teachers completing their initial training, especially those who have worked as assistants abroad. Some may even be former pupils of the school. He will hope to be allowed to finance his arrangements by charging fees to both sets of participants. Colleges and departments of education who might feel that the experience would be valuable for their post-graduate students would no doubt have a freer hand in this respect.

These tutors must give considerable time to preparing the work in advance, for there is very little time to spare once the course is on. Foreign language teachers will not be too familiar with the materials available for English language teaching, though most will have a bank of interesting bits and pieces useful for French teaching at sixth form level - in their minds if not on their shelves. But more and more EFL manuals and anthologies are published each year, and the publishers are happy to send samples and advise. We have found it desirable to prepare some fresh work every time, as much for the sake of the tutors as for that of the students, choosing entertaining or instructive snippets from the daily or weekly press and devising worksheets. The amount and type of tape-recorded material will depend on the hardware available, from language laboratories to cassettes or record players.

Let us assume a basic daily timetable of this kind:

Period 1	09.30-11.00	Target language, groups of eight, aural comprehension, worksheet, discussion of aural text with tutor.
Period 2	11.00-12.30	Text of the day, work in pairs on reading comprehension and worksheet.
Period 3	13.30-14.00	Target language groups of eight, pronunciation with tutor.
Period 4	14.00-15.00	Text of the day, mixed language groups of sixteen with tutor(s), review of work done in pairs, discussion.
Period 5	15.00-16.00	Mixed groups of sixteen or plenary session, various activities.

The following items will be needed for each language:

Period 1 Nine tape-recordings of one to five minutes' duration, longer if they are easy, or if a transcript is to be used, with worksheet or manual.

Sources: commercial courses, bits lifted from radio, home-made interviews, sound tracks from film or VTR (visual element to be projected in plenary session), extracts from discs. This year the Parrot sketch from the Monty Python record was received with delight. It is difficult, so we provided a transcript, but incredibly rich in vocabulary and a marvellous illustration of the concept of language variety or register. The tape-recording can almost always be exploited for practice in grammar and structures as well as lexis. The worksheet can include comprehension questions, slot filling exercises, vocabulary and so on.

Period 2	Five printed texts with worksheets and topics for discussion, chosen for lively language and intrinsic interest. The worksheet will draw attention to idiomatic expressions and complex structures and give scope for open-ended responses using the turns of phrase and vocabulary of the text.
Period 3	Nine to ten short dialogues, poems or readings for pronunciation work. For variety, each student teaches his partner a poem, limerick or joke of his own choice and coaches him in reciting it. The recitation or reading is recorded and played back in plenary session.
Period 4	Discussion based on the text of the day. Language points dealt with in class, contributions expected from L2 learners.
Period 5	a) Formal teaching - two or three sessions. Comparative language work of all kinds: the vowel systems of French and English, the language of the emotions - (how do the students themselves express pleasure, boredom, annoyance, approbation?), *faux amis* in translation (*occasion, opportunité, chance,* etc), formal and informal varieties (for functions such as greetings, leave-taking, well-wishing). Some of this work can be prepared in advance by the students working in pairs, and handed in, in written form, for correction. b) Informal activities - two or three sessions in each language. General knowledge quizzes, prepared by each 'side' in turn; 'Does the team think?' - type discussions; 'Twenty questions'; extempore speaking on topics out of a hat, questions on customs and attitudes prepared in advance by each side, rehearsing and performing situations from daily life, serious or comic. c) Cultural programmes. Listening to records (words of songs provided and previously studied), radiovision or other tape-slide sequences, VTR recordings, short

documentary films (sound tracks already worked over in aural comprehension periods), one or two in each language. This year we showed BBC radiovision programmes on *la belle époque* and David Hockney; both received high ratings.

A slot ought to be found somewhere for work in pairs on 'visual stimuli', as the jargon has it. This can be rounded off by a highly entertaining mixed language group session. Humorous drawings strip cartoons, and photos from advertisements are useful starters, not to mention two excellent booklets of drawings and photographs specially designed for language work: Byrne, Donn, and Andrew Wright *What do you think? Books 1 and 2* Longman, 1974-75.

Some organised out-of-class activities are desirable: visits to museums, theatres, cinemas, a party or disco, a meal in a cheap restaurant, a day at the sea or a ramble in the country. Most of our French visitors stay on a third week if the hosts will have them, at the same rate; even so, both groups seem to like to have some arrangements made for the evenings. Until this year we have organised a party on the last evening of the course; this year the first Friday proved a better time. Such activities are optional except for a little pressure put on the English to ensure that enough of them opt in. Tutors should reckon to take part as well: that does wonders for tutor-student relationships. In fact, the tutors are asked to sell themselves body and soul for the fortnight and need to be on call all the time.

The July course seems set for a long life, and we have hopes of establishing a parallel course in a French town if the authorities prove amenable. It is not the only project of its kind being run in this country, of course, but its restricted size might put it within the scope of individual schools. (Here it is only fair to mention some of the pitfalls. If the organisation is ragged, the impetus is lost; if the langauge laboratory is given to off-days, students and tutors feel frustrated; if the texts are too difficult or outside the range of interests of the age-group, the students lose heart; if discussions degenerate into shouting matches, the less passionate become disaffected; if one or two students are skivers their partners suffer.) We have been dealing with sixth formers, but it would be very interesting to see if reciprocal teaching were possible among younger pupils, or among less gifted ones who may be just as mature and responsible within a narrower range of language competence.

There is one other caveat. It is by no means certain that even 'A' level aspirants will perfectly understand the English texts. Not only may some references escape them; the vocabulary may defeat them also. Certainly students on both sides always comment on the light shed on their own language by the detailed explanation of words or phrases that might otherwise be passed over or taken for granted. We might go further and claim that thus to become conscious of the workings of the native language is one of the principal benefits of shared language work. The student recognises that his thinking and his language do not form a solid block; the one can be prised off the other and manipulated as a sensitive tool by the aware intelligence. Closely associated with attitudes to language are cultural attitudes. 'Fog in Channel, continent cut off' is the cultural equivalent of 'Say it in English, only louder'. But when the customs and assumptions of a person you have come to know and like turn out to be fundamentally different from yours, your own habits of thought no longer seem God-given and absolute. We hope that the course we run each year does as much to broaden the outlook of these young people as it does to enrich their knowledge and experience of the foreign language they are learning.

11. French and German, Somerset

Barrie King

Though Somerset is a rural county with a population of not more than some 406,000, we have enjoyed for many years strong and active LEA support for modern language teaching in our schools. Thus we have our own LEA Language Centre, which offers a comprehensive programme of in-service training, resource compilation and resource production, while some 3,000 children from Somerset go abroad each year on exchanges or study-visits, supported by study-visit packs produced at the Language Centre. Another extra back-up is provided by the intensive courses which are run for fifth and sixth form pupils. Each year for the past few years six intensive courses have been offered at the LEAs residential youth centre at Kilve Court near the north Somerset coast. There are two three-day French courses for able fifth formers, one three-day German course for able fifth formers, one three-day German course for sixth formers, and one ten-to-twelve-day Anglo-French sixth form conference.

Aims

I shall concentrate on the three-day courses, mentioning only in passing the longer Anglo-French conference. Why did we decide to offer our short courses to able pupils? It would be possible to put forward many reasons, but I will mention three. Certainly I am not alone in having been worried for a long time by the very serious drop-out rate, and particularly by the number of able pupils, especially boys, who do not continue with the study of modern languages. Statistics showing that between 1965 and 1972 the proportion of the child population which began French at eleven rose from about one third to about two thirds, while in the same period the number of boys passing 'O' level French actually decreased by 8,369 are extremely alarming.[24] Obviously organisational factors can account in part for such statistics, but I was anxious to offer intensive courses to able pupils in Somerset because I felt that it may well be possible to motivate these youngsters by providing different aims, content and methods in a separate setting, away from their school. Thus the aims of the short intensive course are to provide a structure and atmosphere for very intensive work for three days, to increase facility in aural comprehension and spoken production, to give insights into standards outside those of the individual school, and to offer challenging and rewarding language activities as much as possible with authentic linguistic material. The main bias within the aural and oral skills is not necessarily towards accuracy, but towards the development of confidence and spontaneity.

Course membership

The courses are advertised in all the county's secondary schools and colleges, and membership of each is between 50 and 60. Although this is a large number, more apply for the courses each time than we can accommodate, and it thus becomes necessary to select. The only criteria which we can apply are teachers' assessment of keenness, and ensuring that as large a range as possible of schools is represented on each course.

Problems

Of course the youngsters attending the courses are all volunteers, and all keen to extract as much as possible from their three days, so problems are very few compared with school-based intensive courses. Further advantages are the Kilve Court centre itself, ideally equipped and placed, the expertise of the tutors, and the dream-like pupil-staff ratio. The main problem is one which must never be underestimated, and that is the immense amount of work involved in the preparation of the courses. With 60 students and some 25 sessions, the numbers of texts to be selected and duplicated, activities to be planned in detail, cassettes to be pre-recorded, equipment to be gathered and taken to the centre, programmes to be made out and duplicated, detailed teaching notes for each activity to be prepared and duplicated - all these tasks and many more must not be shirked if the students are to derive maximum benefit. If the course is to be run successfully, then nothing must be left to chance; this means that planning sessions must also be held with the tutors, in which each teaching session and the special techniques demanded are gone through in detail.

Staffing

To facilitate really intensive work, a tutor-student ratio of one to six plus the course director is always our aim. Thus we have the course director, plus ten tutors. For the French courses these are taken from our French assistants, and for the German courses we benefit from our excellent relationships with the Departments of Education at the universities of Bristol and Exeter, who allow us the services of their PGCE students. It is perhaps fair to add that colleagues in the UDE's have remarked upon the benefit which students have also derived from their participation in the courses, and we have certainly noted considerable improvements in the techniques and inventiveness of the assistants who have acted as tutors on our courses when they return to their schools.

Organisation of work

Given that we have 60 students and ten tutors, and that the aim of the courses is to provide opportunities for intensive practice, then it is obviously most advantageous to organise the work as much as possible in small groups. It is still important to create a corporate feeling for the whole course, so there need to be some plenary sessions, and notably right at the beginning of the course, when the ice can be broken and the correct atmosphere and attitudes set. It is noticeable however that, as we have run more and more of the courses, so the plenary sessions become less and less frequent, and organised only for receptive activities, such as watching a film, listening to a song, or listening to a short lead lesson.

Thus we have only some two, three or four plenary sessions and the rest of the activities take place in small groups, containing as much intensive work as pupils can take. In our experience groups of five or six are ideal. Eight seems to be a maximum number for really effective small group work, and groups as small as three can highlight very harshly any disparity in ability, causing problems for pupil motivation and teaching technique.

As we have attempted different techniques, and gradually extended those which have seemed successful, we are moving more and more towards groups of six and eight students, and offering activities within those groups which are suited to initial pairs work, growing naturally into group work. Some of these activities, and notably group cloze, will be discussed later. This structure of pairs work leading into group work seems to be the arrangement by far the most conducive to concentrated work, and creates an ethos of 'auto discipline' which has the most rewarding effects on relationships between staff and students, and on the whole atmosphere of the courses. (A day's programme is attached in the appendix to this paper.)

Content and activities

Before discussing the individual activities, it is advisable to look at the overall programme. We have tried two different approaches:

1. Grouping the whole course around a central theme, with all activities deriving from the theme (eg the East-West Germany question, and the building of the wall).

2. Arranging a mixed content, with no single unifying theme, while still ensuring that within the variety of activities offered, there are maximum opportunities for re-use of linguistic structures in new combinations and contexts.

On the whole it seems that the second, non-centralised approach has been more appreciated by the students, who have sometimes felt that the central theme, though offering excellent opportunties for recurring structure and lexis, can become oppressive, and the activities sometimes *tirées par les cheveux*. I will describe eleven activities which we have found to have been consistently successful. While considering these, it should be borne in mind that a benevolent 'all in the foreign language' rule is established - benevolent with regard to social activities in free time, but strictly observed within all working sessions.

(i) *Posters*

A very good 'ice-breaker' can be conducted in pairs, each pair having to devise, draw and colour a poster on a large sheet of paper. The pairs might, for example, devise an original advertisement, complete with slogan. The resulting posters make an excellent colourful and often very amusing and inventive display.

(ii) *Pronunciation and intonation*

We have found that a brief plenary presentation on pronunciation and intonation, leading to intensive group work, is a good early activity. In French the Crédif film strip and tape series *Contes du petit chat noir* provides excellent graded practice.

(iii) *Singing*

As soon as possible we like to hold a plenary song session, choosing taped songs which have frequently recurring choruses, such as *Aux Champs Elysées* recorded by Joe Dassin, and German drinking songs (these last leading to a *Bierkellerabend* on the last evening of the course, with singing and drinks (Coca Cola, lemonade, etc, served by the tutors.) There are several reasons for having an early plenary song session: with 60 students from many different schools it helps to break the ice if someone (usually the course director) is willing to make a fool of himself, conducting the comprehension phase in the target language, and leading the singing. The song can also serve as a *leit-motiv* for the course, and the first singing session firmly establishes the fact that translation will not be resorted to in working sessions. The song always seems to be learned very quickly by the students, and effective re-use of structures thus acquired has always been a striking feature of the courses, facilitated by their intensive nature.

(iv) *Oral compositions*

We always try to present two oral compositions based on pictures (time is too short for us to mark written work), taking them to the stage of confident recall, and to manipulation if possible.

(v) *Enjoyment films*

We like to show one or two films for enjoyment and atmosphere during the evenings, and have found that, say, Tati films, and background films, such as *Pour un maillot jaune*, or *Deutschlandspiegel* are well received. There is of course an immense selection available at a reasonable hire charge.

(vi) *Films for exploitation*

As well as films for enjoyment and atmosphere, we show at least one which lends itself to linguistic exploitation. The Mary Glasgow films *Fête à Coutances*, *Dax*, and *Entrechaux* are ideal in French courses for follow-up group work, though we have found it advisable to make up our own linguistic activities on them, suited to the students.

(vii) *Language games and activities*

Short language games, lasting no more than half an hour, are extremely useful to provide variety of activity and interest. Games is an ambiguous term, and we take care that the activities involved are accessible, useful linguistically, and as relevant as possible to the course. Two examples are: *oui/non (ja/nein)*, in which the students are bombarded with questions carefully prepared by the tutor, and must not answer with the words *ja/nein - oui/non,* having to use instead expressions, practised beforehand, such as *c'est ça, c'est vrai, voilà, bien sûr, bien sûr que non, (genau, sicher, im Gegenteil)* etc. A second activity is finding questions for statements, of which each tutor is provided with some 75 - eg *Non, il est Allemand, Oui, j'aime beaucoup les gâteaux, C'est une espèce de fruit, Nein, ich stehe um sieben Uhr auf*, etc. We are constantly surprised at the amount of practice in asking questions which even the most able students need, and we have more than once had to insert a formal session on how to formulate questions, in French particularly.

Many other language game activities are possible, and two rich sources of adaptable materials are *Faites vos jeux* and *Guide de l'assistant de Français.*

(viii) *'Good' poetry and songs*

I am convinced that our able linguists need a very carefully chosen language content. It is just not satisfactory to present them constantly with the standard diet of texts which are little more than a vehicle for the linguistic structures being studied. It may sound obvious, but we have consistently found on our courses that presenting poems, or good songs of the *Chanteur compositeur* type, making clear that they really were composed for French or German people to respond to, and then doing worthwhile and challenging work on them, has had a dramatic effect on interest and motivation. Good, authentic songs and poetry have two important facets. Firstly, if appropriately dealt with, they demonstrate that the target language is capable of expressing thoughts and emotions of great subtlety. Secondly, the intrinsic doubt which is so often the central point of good songs and poetry provides great opportunities for linguistic activities with a worthwhile purpose: in *Mon mari est parti* is the young woman really unaware that her husband has been killed in the war, or is she consciously deluding herself? What is there in the style of the text to support either argument? The search for meaning, conducted in the target language, and the necessary use of the language of doubt and hypothesis stretch the students' ability to the maximum, but seem to offer a satisfaction which is so appropriate to the students' stage of development, that they often undertake of their own accord to write their own poetry in groups. Useful sources for songs and poetry of this type are Georges Brassens, Prévert, Brecht and Reinhardt Mey (eg *Lied eines sentimentalen Programmierers, Annabelle).*

(ix) *Guided group discussion*

We had attempted group discussions in French or German, but were never totally satisfied with the participation of all the students until we introduced the ideas in pages 107 to 111 of *Guide de l'assistant de Français*. These suggestions give excellent results in terms of thoughtful structure, easy input of the necessary language and ideas, successful reuse of items, and pupil participation. I can do no more than recommend devisers of intensive courses to adopt and adapt the excellent sequence recommended in this book.

(x) *Cumulative role playing*

For a fairly complicated, but most rewarding way of attempting role-playing discussion, leading to a plenary role-playing presentation, we have found the following sequence admirable:

(a) A theme is chosen: eg 'An exchange visit to Germany/France'.
(b) The students are divided into some eight groups, each with a a tutor, and each with the job of preparing a short sketch on the stay:

Group 1	The journey by train to the host family's town.
Group 2	Arrival at the station; meeting the host family.
Group 3	The first meal with the family.
Group 4	A journey by car, and a picnic.
Group 5	A visit to a relative of the host family.
Group 6	A disco-cum-party; dancing and refreshments.
Group 7	Goodbyes, thank you's, and presents.
Group 8	Buying the return ticket and the return train journey.

In an initial plenary session scenes are allotted, and it is explained that the main characters continue throughout each sketch. Each group has three or four sessions in which to devise its sketch and utterances, and to learn its parts. The whole 'story' is acted by each group in turn in a final plenary session. We have found that the plenary presentation is most successful if we insist that parts are learned, and not read from cue-cards.

For sixth form groups, and particularly two-nation conferences, this structure can be most successfully adapted to a debate format. Instead of a 'story', the students prepare group stances on a theme such as 'Advertising'. In the final plenary session, the chairman invites each group to present prepared statements, and then open debate ensues. For the plenary session, the room layout may be prepared like this:

Group 1

Presents a sketch (eg a TV advertisement)
-then becomes 'the public'
(for or against, to taste)

Group 2

(for advertising)
'Advertising agency people'

Group 3

(against advertising)
'Public watchdogs'

Group 4

(for advertising)
'Financial backers'

Group 5

(against advertising)
'Consumer protection people'

Chairman

If desired, and to avoid too much frustration, a vote can be taken at the end, in which the students express their real opinions, as opposed to those of their assumed *personae*.

(xi) *Group cloze*

This last language activity suggestion is one borrowed from the field of English teaching, and is intended to promote thoughtful discussion and analysis of a text, and reading with reflection. For fuller descriptions of techniques involved the reader might consult Walker's *Reading development and extension*, or possibly approach the Nottingham University Department of Education's English team, who have extended and refined Walker's work. An accessible text of some 200 words is selected, and every nth word left out. If every fifth word is omitted, then the exercise is difficult, every seventh word makes for a fairly easy exercise, and every ninth word is a very easy standard. The students work first in pairs, discussing the most appropriate word with which to fill the blanks. Then the pairs come together in small groups to argue for their own choices, and finally we have found that animated discussion of each group's choices takes place if some four groups meet together with a chairman to argue for and against their choice of words. (Some would say that more ideas and discussion will be forthcoming if work is started immediately in small groups.) At each stage of this exercise the role of chairman is of critical importance, since he must strive not to put his opinion, promoting discussion as much as possible, and fostering the underlying principle that generally there are only degrees of appropriateness in words chosen, and that ideas of 'correct' and 'incorrect' do not apply - even the original author may not have chosen the best words available to him. We have found this exercise to be extremely successful in promoting discussion with a purpose, reading with reflection, and fine attention to syntactic, stylistic, register and contextual cues. Fifth formers might attempt the discussion in English, but they and certainly sixth formers can derive great benefit from discussing in the target language.

Anglo-French sixth form conference

The activities described above are especially successful with courses including matched groups of some twenty to 30 French or German and twenty to 30 English sixth formers. In such conferences these activities, involving work alternating largely between self-teaching pairs and small groups, have created an atmosphere in which the difficult ideal of 'auto-discipline' has become a reality.

Achievements

The four features most worthy of special mention are: the rapid progress made by students, thanks mainly to the intensive nature of the courses allowing constant and immediate consolidation and re-use of structures; the high level of motivation, visible in the excellent poems written by the students and in the work done by students during 'free time'; the excellent atmosphere of 'auto-discipline' engendered by the structure of the activities; and the astounding linguistic standards attained by some of the students, once they have realised that there are no constraints. Can fifth formers discuss literature fluently, intelligently and with feeling in the foreign language? Certainly, given the right content, approach and course structure.

It has been heartening to note that language departments in schools in the county are experimenting with school-based intensive courses, or courses in local teachers' centres, modelled on our Kilve Court experiences.

Are the courses successful? They are immensely demanding to prepare, so there must be sufficient reward to justify the amount of time and energy put into them by the organisers. I would make seven points:

1. The courses are an excellent adjunct to or substitute for increasingly expensive study-visits abroad.
2. Startling progress is made by many in the short time available. Immediately noticeable is the increase in efficiency in aural comprehension. Technical accuracy does not increase as much as the willingness to speak, but there are grounds for believing that accuracy does start to accrue some weeks later, after the course.
3. Saturation is a very real danger, and it is essential constantly to vary the activity, the group sizes, the medium, and the point of focus. On the whole, however, we have found it best not to change the make-up of the small groups or to change their tutors, as the reduction of anxiety is a most important concomitant of linguistic progress, and is achieved remarkably successfully.
4. The short-term linguistic rewards available in intensive courses are invaluable, provided that appropriate activities are devised. For us, these will always include guided group discussions, role-playing presentations or 'debates' and group cloze, since these activities permit the vital three-fold process of teaching something, fostering an awareness in the pupils of what they have learned, and finally offering opportunities of deriving satisfaction from using what they have learned.
5. There is a benign side-effect which is certainly not to be underestimated, in the benefit derived by the assistants or PGCE tutors from taking part in carefully structured and varied teaching situations.
6. Apart from any linguistic considerations, is is clear that the residential experience is very valuable for the young people taking part.
7. Lastly, three tangible proofs of the success of the courses are available to us: we always have more applications for the courses than we can cater for; letters of appreciation from both pupils and parents often show that the courses have provided a motivational

fillip; and one assistant formed such a close bond with his group on one course, that he was incessantly besieged thereafter by phone-calls and letters from his students begging him to transfer to their schools!

Appendix

A sample day's timetable

08.30	*Frühstück*
09.00	*Vollversammlung: Film - Eine weitere Reise nach Berlin*
10.00	*Gruppen: Brennpunkt Berlin*
11.00	*Kaffee*
11.15 - 12.30	*Vollversammlung: Spielbühne ,,Ihr tretet auf!''*
13.00	*Mittagessen*
14.00 - 14.45	*Gruppen: Kreuzworträtsel*
14.45 - 15.00	*Vollversammlung: Lied eines sentimentalen Programmierers*
15.00 - 15.50	*Gruppen: Lied eines sentimentalen Programmierers*
16.00	*Tee*
17.00 - 18.00	*Gruppen: Jeden Tag ist einfach - was geschah gestern?*
18.00 - 18.30	*Gruppen: Spiel : ,,Ja/Nein''*
19.00	*Abendessen*
19.45	*Vorversammlung: Filme*
21.00	*Man singt.*

08.30	*Petit déjeuner*
09.15	*Session plénière: exercices de prononciation*
09.30	*Groupes: exercices de prononciation*
10.00	*Groupes: Jeu de rôle*
11.00	*Café*
11.30 - 12.30	*Groupes: Discussion guidée*
13.00	*Déjeuner*
14.00	*Groupes: Pour faire le portrait d'un oiseau*
15.00 - 15.25	*Session plénière: Chanson de Georges Brassens - 'Marinette'*
15.25 - 25.45	*Groupes: Marinette*
16.00	*Goûter*

16.30	*Groupes: Exercice 'cloze'*
17.30 - 18.30	*Groupes: Jeux 'oui/non': Trouvez la question*
19.00	*Dîner*
20.00	*Film: 'Entrechaux'*
20.20	*Groupes: Discussion 'Entrechaux'*
21.00	*On chante, et on danse*

Reference

24 Department of Education and Science *Trends in Education*, HMSO, 1976. pp. 4 and 5.

Bibliography

Buckby, M *Faites vos jeux* Language Teaching Centre, University of York, 1971.
Contes du petit chat noir Crédif (Film strip and open-reel tapes), 1972.
Film catalogues:
Connoisseur Films Ltd, 58 Wardour Street, London W1
Contemporary Films Ltd, 55 Greek Street, London W1B 6DB
Catalogue of French 16mm films, French Institute, 15 Queensbury Place, London SW7
German Film Library Catalogue, Viscom Ltd, 6/7 Great Chapel Street, London W1V 3AG
For records, slides, tapes: Documentation Pédagogique, French Embassy, 22 Wilton Crescent, London, SW1
Fontier, Geneviève, and Madeleine Le Cunff *Guide de l'assistant de français* Longman, 1975.
Mary Glasgow Publications *Fête à Coutances, Dax, Entrechaux.* These short films for sale or hire.
Walker, Christopher *Reading development and extension* Ward Lock Educational, 1974.

12. Residential weeks in French, Pimlico School

Richard Townsend

The experiment is a small one and does not pretend to be a piece of controlled research. However, insofar as secondary school teachers are capable of measuring the success of their work, we are very encouraged by our experiences to date.

Pimlico School is a large mixed comprehensive school in inner London, with pupils aged eleven to eighteen of all abilities and backgrounds. In 1970 it was created from four schools and faces many of the problems symptomatic of a school finding its identity in a large city. The languages department is a large one, with some eighteen teachers and four foreign language assistants teaching modern languages and Latin. French is taught as the first foreign language to the whole ability range for three years. German, Italian and Spanish are offered as alternative or additional modern languages in the fourth year option scheme. In 1977 nearly 70 per cent of the 300 third year pupils opted to continue with a modern language into the fourth year. A relatively small number of these are potential 'O' level candidates.

Our department, like many other modern language departments, was passing through a period of serious questioning and self-doubt. We had not yet come to terms with teaching a foreign language to the whole ability range. According to any criteria, the output was not justifying the input. Many teachers were frustrated by the results of three or five years' teaching and neither the morale nor the reputation of the department was high.

School journeys abroad had been arranged, carefully prepared and involving interesting work schemes. While not necessarily pointing to improved examination success, they had indicated increased motivation among the pupils and teachers. But the costs of such journeys were rising rapidly beyond the pockets of many of our families. And while school journeys can be very useful in giving a taste of the foreign culture, perhaps in preparation for a later individual visit or exchange, facilities are often not available for intensive on-the-spot exploitation of the foreign language. Indeed, great ingenuity is required of the teacher to encourage any use of the foreign language beyond a handful of words in a shop or a café. Could residential weeks play a different role?

We were looking for an experience which would offer some immediate success to both pupil and teacher through continuous exposure to the language within a context where language would be seen to be achieving something.

Coincidentally, the school was encouraging the use of its residential centre by specialist subject departments which had not previously used it. So we went ahead with an experimental French weekend, and later with a French week.

Selection

Age, ability, willingness, maturity and background were all considered as possible criteria for selecting pupils. From the point of view of age, the fourth year option groups had several advantages. With fewer pupils, the process of selection would be less difficult than in the ten-form first three years. In the fifth year, the demands on time with examinations pending would be an obstacle during term-time, while other subject departments seemed more willing to release pupils during the fourth year. A French week at this stage would also provide an incentive for the new option groups. Finally, while the skills of listening and speaking are being given greater emphasis in the early years, there is still a tendency to undervalue them as the pupils grow older and nearer the written examinations.

Having decided on the fourth year, we still had no idea how many pupils would want to come. Our option groups are settled according to examination potential ('O' level, good CSE, weaker CSE and non-exam) covering a very wide range of ability. Willingness to work hard and to co-operate in the experiment seemed more important than proven ability. So we decided to offer the course to all those studying French, whichever group they were in. None should be excluded by the cost since grants were available. It was fortunate that on the first occasion the demand was exactly equal to the places available. Most of the pupils - though by no means all - came from the 'O' level and the good CSE groups. There was a small majority of girls over boys, though this has not always been the case.

Since the first time, the demand for places has steadily grown, partly as a result of the increasing numbers opting to continue French into the fourth year, and partly due to the good reputation the course has built up. However the mixture of ability has worked well, and places are still shared between all the groups. Rather than deny any one section of the pupils the opportunity of participating, we would prefer the number of weeks available to be increased.

Practical difficulties

Already having an offer of the use of the school's residential centre was a major obstacle overcome. It was important to explain to the tutor warden and housekeeper how we were planning to use the centre and for what reasons, since the atmosphere would be very different from the weeks normally held there. They were very cooperative and it was agreed that we could use the building as we wished, within reasonable limits.

The accommodation comprises a lounge, dining-room, kitchen, record room and classroom on the ground floor. The bedrooms (three to six beds per room) are on the first floor. The pupils are responsible for the upkeep of their own rooms and the house, for serving meals and for washing up. The centre stands in a three and a half acre site in the Surrey countryside, with an allotment, orchards, gardens, a tennis court, a football pitch, a games room, an assault course, a swimming pool, as well as a goat paddock and a pig sty. The pupils travel to the centre by coach.

For the French weeks, each pupil is charged an addition of £3 to the regular subsidised weekly cost (currently £6.50). This covers the extra adults, a more French menu and small prizes. Grants are available for those pupils who already receive free dinners or uniform grants. Films are lent free of charge by the ILEA film library and the department provides any extra materials needed.

Two members of the regular teaching staff are accompanied by two foreign language assistants (by arrangement with another school) and one or two students. Sixth form students have also been involved. The department agrees to cover the two absent teachers where possible. We are helped here by the school timetable which makes an additional teacher available as a resource for some of the lessons in years 1 to 3, throughout the year. Different members of the department 'resource' at different times and are able to help out when the regular teacher is absent.

A great deal of time was needed for the planning of the original programme. Since then only minor modifications have been needed in the light of experience and the early groundwork is still proving invaluable. It is still important to hold discussions before each course, to work out the details and to discover the particular skills and talents of the staff involved. The teachers, who will be working together for five days, need to feel at ease in each others' company and must have the security of knowing exactly what is expected of them. We soon discovered that only if the staff were thoroughly confident about the programme could they concentrate on making it work successfully, and it means more to them if they have helped in the planning. Free time also needs to be carefully thought out, since energy is not limitless.

Making the programme work

A warm, friendly and relaxed approach is fundamental in order to take full advantage of the residential setting. To encourage a French *ambiance,* the house is decorated with French posters, maps, notices, advertisements and signs. Small exhibitions are mounted. Travel posters, pop magazines, food and car advertisements and the posters from Longman's packs (*La vie en France* etc) and from *Eclair* are useful, and provide valuable materials for a quiz.

A selection of French newspapers, magazines, card games, French *Scrabble* and other games are made available for any free time, in addition to the usual recreations. When the weather is good, walks are arranged in the local countryside and a *pétanque* championship is held. Agreement is needed to speak as much French as possible during the meal-times and the free time and, in our experience, French is used surprisingly often, once a relaxed, sociable atmosphere has been created. As an additional incentive, a system of *gages* has been introduced, with twenty possible forfeits for those caught speaking English. They range from *faire une déclaration d'amour à un garçon / une fille de votre choix* to *compter de vingt à un.*

While taking into account the human element, and insisting on flexibility, we have arrived at the following overall scheme. It is distributed to the pupils in advance.

Semaine française: Programme général
Lundi
Arrivée (vers 11.45)

Acceuil fait par Annick et Bernard

Introduction faite par les professeurs:
Règles de la maison

Distribution des fiches d'identité

Défaire les valises et préparer les chambres

Déjeuner dans la salle à manger

Rassemblement dans la salle de classe pour discuter du plan de la semaine:
1. *Comment se présenter;*
2. *Exclamations françaises;*
3. *Quelques expressions importantes*

Travail en groupes (Astérix, Obélix, Idéfix, Assurancetourix):
1. *Chacun doit se présenter;*
2. *Les différentes parties de la maison;*
3. *Jeux de prononciation*

Travail en groups (Allouettes, Hiboux, Renards, Serpents):
Jeux divers

Temps libre: Activités diverses: pétanque, ping-pong, jeux français, Scrabble, cartes, lecture etc.

Travail en groups: Théâtre

Temps libre

Dîner (vers 19.00).

Film ou diapositives

Chansons

Heure du coucher.

Programme quotidien (mardi, mercredi, jeudi, vendredi)

Petit déjeuner (08.00)

Inspection des chambres

Exercices de prononciation. Concours

Travail en groupes (1): Journal. Quelques points grammaticaux

Temps libre: Pétanque, ping-pong, promenade etc.

Travail en groupes (2): Jeux de vocabulaire

Déjeuner (12.30)

Temps libre

Exercices de simulation (dans la salle de classe)

Travail en groupes (3): Jeux divers

Temps libre

Travail en groupes (4): Théâtre

Dîner (vers 19.00)

Préparation des distractions du soir

Film ou diapositives

Chansons ou jeux

Cabaret

Heure du coucher.

(Le programme du vendredi comprendra: La grande finale du championnat de pétanque).

The staff-pupil ratio allows much of the work to be carried out in small groups of six to nine. Each pupil is in two different groups, according to the activity. Mixed-ability groups have proved particularly appropriate for certain language games, pronunciation exercises and the sketches. More homogeneous groups have been more effective for work on the journal, involving points of grammar, and vocabulary games. The groups keep the same teacher for the journal and grammar work, which needs continuity, but circulate for the other activities. The more mentally tiring work takes place earlier in the day.

We have not attempted to integrate completely the language work, particularly the journal and questions of grammar, with the school programme. Rather than impose in advance a list of points to be covered, we have found it more useful and practical to concentrate on difficulties as they occur in the writing of the journal. The range of grammar books from *A votre avis* are available for reference when required.

An aspect of the programme which has gained in importance has been the *théâtre.* Each group prepares and rehearses two French sketches during the week, with the assistance of one adult. The role-playing books *What do I say now?* and *What do I say next?* (also from *A votre avis*) can be very useful starting points, suggesting such scenes as making a 'date'. going to the cinema, hitch-hiking, a visit to a restaurant, and staying with a French family. The imagination and talents of each group quickly expand - and pervert - the material! Some of the most self-conscious and orally shy pupils have shown surprising ability when playing the role of a French thief, lover or drop-out. The results have not always been linguistically flawless, but have always been stimulating.

The sketches are performed as part of the evening's entertainment in front of the whole group. They alternate with slides, talks, films (such as the Mary Glasgow films *Dax, Fête à Coutances* and *Entrechaux*) and songs (folk songs and records of Béart, Vian, Prévert, Moustaki, Brassens and others). Pupils who play musical instruments are encouraged to bring them. A rich source of ideas for games has been the *Guide de l'assistant de français* by Geneviève Fontier.

Finally, throughout the week, the pupils compile their own folder, including their journal and other notes, copies of songs learnt, filmtracks and the recipes of the French meals eaten - *Boeuf bourguignon, Poulet basquaise, Quiche aux oignons, salade aux tomates* were among the most recent. The pupils keep the folders as a written record of the course.

Assessing the course

In an article such as this, it is difficult to convey the flavour and essence of a very human experience. No two weeks are the same. Much depends on the people involved. Some assistants and teachers have been particularly gifted in creating the right atmosphere for the pupils. Nor is it possible to draw up a definitive list of successful activities, since success has depended on the variety of activities and on the atmosphere in which they have taken place.

The comments from the pupils, collected from the questionnaires they are asked to complete after the course, have presented a very positive picture. While different pupils naturally prefer different activities, all have enjoyed the weeks. There has been a general feeling of much progress in French being made, although some have found five days too short ('I was just beginning to speak a lot when we had to come home'). A few thought that the teachers should have been stricter at stamping out English, though this might have risked the very atmosphere created. We have not been able to undertake a serious long-term evaluation of the results, or a rigorous study of the after-effects. But there has been a definite boost to the morale of the pupils and staff who have taken part and a serious questioning of the regular school programme in the light of the experience. Two of the pupils went so far as to criticise the teaching in school by saying 'We learnt more in five days than we did in the previous year' - a highly subjective comment which nevertheless gives food for thought.

There is a place for experiments with different age-groups and different lengths of time, but the expansion of such projects depends on practical considerations such as the availability of time, money and willing people. We cannot yet envisage integrating such a scheme into the year's programme. Some would say that one of the strengths of the week is the very difference from the school programme, but should that distinction continue?

I would emphasise the following points as the main advantages of a residential language course. Any residential course can make a valuable contribution to the pupils' general education; a language course can offer particularly rich experiences and social benefits. Given the chance to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere, with a view to establishing mutual trust and confidence, continous exposure to the French language can be achieved within the context of one complete French day, which is a relatively inexpensive way of offering all pupils an experience of the life and culture of a foreign country.

Many pupils are inhibited by the size of the normal class unit. This course offers the chance of intensive group work, more individual attention and a less rigid timetable for catering for individual needs and difficulties. Within its more realistic framework, there is the opportunity for immediate and relevant reinforcement of points learnt. Within the oral work, there is ample opportunity for showing in action the variety of exchanges, attitudes, gestures, exclamations, tone and mood which are rarely presented realistically in a classroom.

The language is seen to be achieving something; the barrier between work and play is broken down and learning can result from all the activities - learning while living together - while it is possible to involve to the full the often neglected foreign language assistants and students.

There are many opportunities for the teacher to examine critically the teacher-taught role, by taking him away from the permanent central role. He shares the work with other adults and encourages the pupils to rely more on each other. However demanding, it is a welcome break from routine and offers the chance of seeing some immediate results from teaching. These experiences may well point to new directions and practical applications for classroom teaching, and moreover it is excellent publicity for language learning.

13. A two-day oral French course, West Sussex

D P G Maddock

This course was held in December 1976 at Lodge Hill, the West Sussex Residential Centre. Each pupil paid a little under £4. The aim of the course was to provide conditions in which those participating would have good opportunities to hear a lot of French spoken, and for expressing themselves in French on mainly uncomplicated themes. I started from the premise that pupils would be less likely to feel inhibited in this kind of situation which seemed to be more conducive to oral French than the normal lesson. No writing was undertaken; a few activities involved a little reading. We were not so much aiming to teach new structures or vocabulary as to enable pupils to speak naturally, without fear of being corrected.

The target group included fifth and sixth form pupils. All the members of our sixth form studying French took part (sixteen) plus 31 fifth year pupils. About two-thirds of these are 'O' level and the remainder CSE candidates. We chose this group since we felt that it would include those most likely to be able to speak reasonably fluently, as well as understand most easily what was said to them. For most of the pupils, in addition, the fact that an external or internal oral examination was not too far away would have a motivating influence.

There was, as is indicated by the total number participating, a good response to the idea of the course. The only problem initially was the obvious one of devising a varied and interesting programme. The wide range of ability in aural/oral French was an additional hazard, it seemed. We had 47 pupils, three members of staff, plus our French *assistante*. One of our staff is a French native. I think that having two native speakers was useful, and helped to add to the naturalness of the venture. The pupils were for most of the time divided into five groups of nine each. Our two most fluent sixth formers became the fifth member of staff. Each member of staff undertook two activities with each of the groups. These sessions lasted one hour, and each group therefore took part in ten group activities. The groups were constituted to give a balance of upper and lower sixth, fifth year 'O' level and CSE pupils. The ten activities were:

1. Improvised conversation based on a given outline (a café scene). The pupils prepared and then acted out these scenes. The best were presented to everyone at the end of the course.

2. A quiz (general knowledge). Having done the teacher's quiz the first group then worked out some questions for the next group to answer, and so on.
3. A recording of some radio news items, based on an actual broadcast taped in advance. The intention here was to concentrate on pronunciation and intonation.
4. 'What's my line?' An imitation of the well-known TV panel game.
5. 'Twenty questions'.
6. Longman french packs - language games, *Allez-y.* I used about five of these with each group. About ten of them seemed suitable for this age range. This was the most structured of the activities, and was the one which was intended to teach or at least practise certain types of sentence. The games I found most useful were Blue 5 and 6, Green 5, 7 and 12, Brown 3 and 9, and Red 4 and 10. In some cases I found it suitable to split the group of nine into three.
7. Lexicon and Scrabble. These obviously involved less listening and speaking.
8. Other games of a 'Happy families' type. French packs of cards were available for these from my own family resources.
9. Questions and answers, where the answers had to be matched to the questions. These were at first distributed on pieces of card, and then done with either the question or the answer having been withdrawn. (They found the formation of some of the questions difficult.) Plus a varied selection of brain-teasers.
10. A mixed bag of word games; descriptions of other members of the group. (This activity was conducted by our *assistante*.)

In addition we had three sessions when we all came together. In the first of these we had a balloon debate; four members of staff and four sixth-formers were in the balloon. The audience could also ask questions or make comments. *Un escargot* (a representative of the whole species) was saved by almost unanimous vote. This debate was preceded by the game in which each pupil/member of staff had to find out who he/she was. The name of a well-known person was pinned to each back. A sheet of sample questions was issued. In the second joint session, which was from 20.00 - 22.00 we had 'Any questions' involving three members of staff and three members of the upper sixth on the panel, and then some entertainment. This consisted of some singing, individual and community, some recitation, and a very amusing parody of the 'Generation game', performed by our lower sixth group. In the third joint session, which came at the end of the course, we played back some of the recordings, and had performed some of the scenes prepared.

I had set out with the ideal that no English would be spoken at all during the two days, except in bedrooms. This ideal proved to be unrealisable outside the sessions indicated. However, quite a large number of the pupils made a real effort to converse with each other and with the staff in French at meal times and in the common room. Certainly no-one needed to feel that there was anything odd or false in using French rather than their own language, right from the time that we boarded the coach to leave school

The venture proved to be very worthwhile. Some of the older pupils said afterwards that they would have liked it to last longer. This sort of comment is always true, of course, even when one has a three-week exchange visit. I think that the duration was about right, given the age of the pupils involved. The older pupils also said that they would have welcomed a situation where they were sometimes all together as sixth formers, and where the activity could have been pitched at a higher level. This is a fair point, although it was not the case that all the sixth formers were more fluent or willing than those younger than themselves.

It is, of course, difficult to indicate realistically what profit was gained from this course. The pupils said subsequently that they thought it was valuable, and they certainly seemed to enjoy it. If most of them are now more willing to say something in French, and understand a little better, it will have been profitable.

I hope to hold a similar course again next year, perhaps extending it by one day. We shall need to think up some more ideas for the group sessions; I think a little more variety is needed. Perhaps also, it would be valuable if the pupils prepared in advance rather more than they were asked to this time. We had thought of having a feature film; if we extended the course by one day this would evidently be a good idea. We could also extend the age range down to include good fourth-year pupils.

14. One-day intensive courses, Leicestershire

D Sidwell

Because costs now make the idea of a residential language weekend for sixth formers less attractive we have begun to run single days of the foreign language; our experience at sixth form level has led us to try the same sort of thing with younger students.

The sixth form day is very popular with schools and staff and oversubscription has meant that we have had to restrict the numbers, either by designating a catchment area for the day, or by giving upper or lower sixth priority. The days have either been hosted by a school or run at the Leicestershire Resources Centre, whose French collection has added considerably to the creation of atmosphere.

The pattern of the sixth form days varies a little depending upon suggestions offered by the schools, but the central aim remains the same-the students should use the foreign language rather than listen to it. This means that groups have to be of no greater than ten and preferably smaller, and to maintain interest, activities must reflect the aim in as varied a manner as possible. At sixth form level very few of the activities demand writing and that which is required should, we feel, result from an active use of the language.

A typical day will run from 09.30 to 15.30. Lunch may be sandwiches supplemented by a glass of wine and some cheese, and in one school we have become used to an excellent *soupe à l'oignon*. The advantage of sandwich lunches taken together is that the foreign language speaking is uninterrupted. Usually there is a film at some point, which provides an alternative activity a little less demanding than the exercises and games of the rest of the day. We have found from experience that it should not be too long - one and a half hours would be a maximum and 30 to 40 minutes the best length.

Commonsense dictates that the more strenuous linguistic activities should be put in the morning session and the more lighthearted in the afternoon. On some occasions the day has ended with excellently prepared short concerts or reviews contributed by participants and perhaps the singing of songs. The group activities may include any of the following, none of which should last more than half an hour and many of which may take only fifteen minutes:

- a cloze text;
- a passage for question and answer;
- a text kept by the teacher, the content of which must be found out in in detail by the students through questions, answered in the main by 'yes' or 'no'. The students then relate the text;
- a picture treated in the same way as above;
- a situation is given to the students, whether verbally or as a passage, from which they must make a dialogue. They make notes for this;
- the teacher has been witness to a crime or some lively event and is questioned by students, who have to make some sort of report. In this activity it is important that the teacher speaks fast and volubly and that the students are given one or two pointers for their interrogation;
- a text with an alternative vocabulary at certain points. Students have to deduce or predict meaning and select the appropriate vocabulary;
- chain stories which are begun by one person and continued by the next and so on;
- alibis which are prepared in pairs over lunch and broken down, or otherwise, in the groups during the afternoon;
- a text in English is given to the students. The tutor explains that he does not understand anything of the language and asks the students to give him the content of the passage in detail;
- funny picture. A shape is drawn and suggestions are offered for what it is, the more amusing the better.
- advertisements can be made up

There are of course many other games or short exercises which can be used, the main point being to keep them fairly varied and short.

All the activities suggested demand conversation, questioning, the offering of ideas and so on - they also demand quite lively group leaders who can encourage students to participate and not stop the flow of communication by an over-insistence on correctness.

The groups of students are led by members of the advisory staff, one or two foreign assistants whose experience and abilities can be relied upon, and, perhaps most important, by members of staff from participating schools. At times there are enough tutors to allow two to some groups and here another function of this day is seen. It is excellent in-service education for teachers, enabling them to experience and try new methods, work with other colleagues, practising the all important use of the foreign language during the teaching of it, and allowing them to see students other than their own - groups, of course, being made up from a variety of schools.

The involvement of teachers is necessary in language days for younger students also. Here the aims are much the same - as much spoken foreign language as possible, but because the range of the third or fourth former is more restricted than the sixth former, closer liaison with the school in question is necessary. Are groups to be mixed-ability or setted? How far on are they? What experience have they in this or that area of vocabulary? What areas would the staff like emphasised? These questions have to be gone into and because the students are less able actually to offer language, the work has to be more carefully structured. But the principles remain - varied activity, no activity being too long, pleasure being properly mixed with instruction, and the staff being fully involved, seeing activities, participating and creating the atmosphere.

A word about accommodation. As far as possible this should be self-contained with a large meeting area, a projection room, and a number of small tutorial rooms. It is quite possible for two or more groups to work in one large room, but better, of course, if smaller rooms are available.

And numbers? You require 40 to 50 to create atmosphere, and we have found about 90 enough to manage.

15. Intensive courses in Hertfordshire

V M Howe

As far back as 1968 when primary French was in full expansion, there seemed to be a great need for these young, enthusiastic, language learners to be given the opportunity to use their French in a real life situation. For the vast majority of primary pupils a visit to France was not possible or even desirable so it was decided to create a French environment in a residential centre which children could enjoy for a three-day session.

This opportunity has since been offered regularly to fourth year primary children who have spent two years leaning French and therefore have acquired some basic structures and vocabulary. Only a limited number of children from any one school are invited to take part. Usually four schools will send eight or nine children, this mixture ensures that the community is less hampered by traditions than if all the children come from the same school. The children are of varying ability and schools are particularly asked not to send only their best pupils. All the children are volunteers and there is always a waiting list in each of the schools invited. Although the parents are expected to pay a modest course fee the in-county rate rarely prevents any child from attending. However, schools are always ready to support any child coming from a home where there is financial hardship.

With so few children coming from each school it is rarely possible for a member of staff to accompany them full-time, although they are often visited by their teacher during the session. Instead, French language assistants or teachers in training are invited to take part. It has been found that it is important to have one member of staff for eight pupils. The staff are not remunerated in any way for their work, but they are not charged for their accommodation. Teachers in training and assistants consider it a worthwhile educational experience and many ask to return to help with other sessions. The staff arrive ahead of the children in order to make the working environment as French as possible, with displays of pictures, maps and books about France, with a French table on which small items brought back from France are exhibited.

When the children arrive they are greeted in French and it is important that from this moment no word of English is spoken by the staff. Once there is a relaxation of this for any reason whatsoever, it is difficult to ensure the children's total commitment to the project and the fun of 'doing it all in French'. Sometimes the children reply in English, this is acceptable initially providing the member of staff repeats the answer in French and under no circumstances speaks to the child in English. There is an advantage when the children do not already know the staff, for they imagine them to be French-speaking, they also believe that the house is devoted to French language activities and that the staff reside there permanently. So that the children have the security of an adult to whom they can turn at any time, 'on arrival they are put into small groups of eight, and a member of staff will take on responsibility for these children. Every part of daily life in a residential community becomes a learning situation. The children's installation in the bedroom, the unpacking of their cases and the visit round the house provide a wealth of language work. It is important that the children should know where everything is in the house so that they can easily respond to instructions, some time is spent learning the names of the rooms and of the staff members. Each member of staff will sit with his/her group at table and supervise the children's going to bed and getting up in the morning. During mealtimes conversation is also in French, and covers the child's family and interests, his likes and dislikes; in a short time children develop quite good table talk in French.

For each session a theme is chosen, for example, Paris, the circus, the family, shops, or the exploitation of a story. A typical day could be as follows: after breakfast an hour and a half is devoted to the acquisition of structures and vocabulary applicable to the theme chosen. The children rotate in groups, spending fifteen minutes with a different member of staff, each of whom has a specific teaching point to exploit. These are taught by means of games material which has been created in order to present the language in a more lively way. In the case of the Paris theme:
il/elle va à la/au plus names of monuments in Paris
est-ce que je peux aller au bureau de tabac?
je voudrais une cravate rouge, s'il vous plaît (buying souvenirs for family)
à quelle heure part le train/l'autobus/pour Londres/La Madeleine?

The latter part of the morning is devoted to an outdoor game which could be a treasure hunt, involving clues relating to the theme, or a game which we call *L'escargot.* These outdoor activities are usually played in pairs, the children choosing their own partner.

In the afternoon craft work is organised, each group will chose an activity which leads to a dramatic presentation at the end of the sessions. Before tackling craft activities, vocabulary games are playing, so that the children know instantly the word for a stapler, sellotape and other items of vocabulary. It is remarkable how quickly they can assimilate words when they are given an opportunity first to handle the objects and, later, to use them in a meaningful context. The importance of craft work is not so much the end result but the amount of language work arising from the activity. The children might make simple stick puppets, shadow puppets or figurines to be used with a flannel-graph board, or produce a set of pictures which could later be photographed to become the visual element of a slide tape story. In each case the story element would be related to the theme of the course and a simple text is devised to meet the needs of the individual child so that he/she can have the satisfaction of success however limited his participation in the final presentation. It is not expected that a child should learn more than one sentence of the text which has been devised by the group. Even though the children might already be familiar with the written word it is vital that they should not see the sentence written down; it must be memorised with the help of visual material made such as puppets, figurines, pictures. For example, a child who has made a stick puppet of an old man as part of a scene in Paris where tourists are asking for directions will learn his sentence while manipulating his puppet and in response to a question put directly to him:

eg Question: *Où est la Tour Eiffel, s'il vous plait?*
Answer: *Je ne sais pas, demandez à l'agent de police devant la boulangerie.*

In this way the spontaneity, accent and intonation are safeguarded, whilst at the same time a structure which has been learnt is now put into a lively and meaningful situation.

After tea as far as possible outdoor activities are organised. A number of suitable games have been chosen because they introduce commands, numbers or repetitive phrases. However, when sessions take place during the winter months, French folk dances, singing games, action games or role playing are organised during this time.

The evening session is frequently devoted to party type games usually with a linguistic bias, a film, storytelling or an auctioneering game. To play this game each group is given a large sum of francs (4,500F) in notes representing 5F, 10F, 50F, 100F and the object is to furnish all the rooms of the house by bidding for items of furniture. This has been devised to give the children an opportunity to learn quickly not only the names of the furniture in a house but also to manipulate high numbers.

During the course singing plays an important part. There is a song for everything, getting up in the morning, if the sun shines, if it rains, before meals and going to bed. Children learn the songs rapidly and this helps their integration into the new community. Singing takes place at odd moments rather than having a set place in the programme.

In order to provide a realistic shopping situation for the children, a tuckshop is run by a member of staff; this sells sweets and postcards of the house. The children bring ten or fifteen pence which is changed into real French francs on arrival and at different times of day the shop is open for them to make their purchases.

The children are able to sustain interest and enthusiasm throughout a long day because the programme is extremely varied and provides opportunities for the children to take part alternately in intellectual, physical and creative activities.

The children are left little time to themselves as they would naturally revert to English if left alone. The staff make a point of spending every possible moment with them during the course. Over the years it has been noticed that the less able children, often with limited knowledge of French, have adapted well to this intensive situation. Because of the practical and enjoyable nature of the activities they are always able to take part, often by imitation. The children work mostly in pairs or in small groups and this builds up the confidence of the weaker children. When the time comes to say goodbye the children are surprised to learn that many of the staff are English and that the residential centre is used for other courses besides French. It is in some ways a pity that they take part in the clearing up, which reveals that the French environment they have enjoyed will not exist after their departure.

The children's reaction when they return to school is one of achievement for they have survived three whole days of speaking French, enjoyment because the activities were fun, they have discovered that French is not just a subject taught in school but a real means of communication. Teachers have spoken of the enthusiasm of the pupils on their return and of the spin off that this has on other pupils in the class. Unfortunately it is not possible to offer this type of intensive session to every child who would like to participate. but as a result of this pioneer work, programmes have been devised and activities adapted to provide a French afternoon or French day for a whole class in the school situation.

The success of intensive sessions with primary pupils has rapidly led to the organisation of residential weekend courses for secondary pupils at all levels. It has been found that an adaptation of the course originally prepared for primary children is an excellent motivator for secondary pupils either at the end of their second year or in their third year. It is at this age that pupils so often need a boost to their language learning and pupils have frequently been motivated to opt to continue with French at the end of the third year after participating in an intensive course.

In the same way, weekend courses have been organised for pupils preparing for CSE or 'O' level examinations, in order to increase their confidence in their ability to speak the language. Naturally the activities are varied according to the needs and interests of the age groups, but a theme is usually chosen often related to a region of France, eg Brittany, Provence, or to a personality, eg Napoleon, Louis Pasteur, the Scarlet Pimpernel.

The demand for intensive courses is so great that many of them are now organised in the schools sometimes on school days, on a Saturday, or even during the holidays. There are naturally advantages and disadvantages of taking the courses into primary, middle and secondary schools in schooltime. It is obviously very helpful when the class teacher can participate and later follow up the work with the pupils in the classroom. There is also interest and excitement created by this work amongst children of other classes in the school who would also like to participate. In one particular school, arrangements for a course had to be multiplied by three, following demands from children in parallel classes. It is however more difficult to create a French environment in a school where there are already set patterns regarding time, codes of behaviour and where there are also demands made on the children by other members of staff for extra-curricular activities, sports etc. The chief difficulty is the lack of time and the fact that the children are not able to experience whole time living in the French language afforded by a course at a residential centre.

Single days devoted to sixth forms have also proved very successful, particularly when the pupils come from small sixth form French groups and need the stimulation of their peers. The programmes have been geared to the production of a radio programme, different aspects of life in France and *Les jeunes en France.*

This intensive language work which has been pioneered in French has now been recognised by teachers of other languages as a positive way to increase their pupils' motivation and to improve their oral work. Residential and day courses have now been [illegible]ganised for pupils learning German and Italian.

Intensive courses have prov[illegible]selves to be extremely worthwhile both for achievement and [illegible] in language learning. They are invaluable as preparation for a visit to the foreign country and for some pupils for whom a visit abroad is not possible, an essential ingredient to their study of the foreign language.

Bibliography

Source books for games

Bonaventure, Josick *Jeux d'interieur* Editions Fleurus, 1973.
Demarbre, Anfré *200 jeux 200 variantes* Editions Berger Levrault, 1960.
Fichier de jeux des FFC Editions des Francs Franches Camarades, nd.
Lee, W R *Language teaching games and contests* Oxford University Press, 1965.
Limbos, Edouard Fêtes *sportives et de plein air* Editions Fleurus, 1972.
Limbos, E, and J Beauregard *Grands jeux* Editions Fleurus, nd.

Source books for songs and dances

François, Suzanne and Jacques Lafont *En me promenant* Editions du Scarabée, 1966.
Guilcher, J M *Dix danses des pays de France* Répertoires du Père Castor Flammarion, 1947.
Guilcher, J M *Rondes et jeux dansés* Albums du Père Castor Flammarion, 1956.
Lemit, William *Ensemble* Editions du Scarabée, 1946.
Lemit, William *Vacances* Editions du Scarabée, 1953.
Riondet, Jean, and Pierre Amiot *Vents de chez nous* Editions du Scarabée, 1961.

Part four: Conclusion

16. Aspects of intensive language experience

Harry Rée

The contributors to this book are all aiming to provide one approach to learning and teaching a foreign language through an intensive experience of it, but the means described, and obliquely suggested, are remarkably diverse. And it's good to have so much agreement about the destination, and so many different recommended routes to reach it.

Intensive courses, as we know them, hit schools late in this century. Until the sixties the grammar school approach alone dominated the teaching of modern languages, and in the newly developing comprehensive schools the mixture prescribed was the same as before but diluted. The arrival of electronic aids at first tended merely to make teachers and academics a bit more optimistic about their future effectiveness; with these new appliances we could surely expect a gratuitous boost and save our voices. Disappointment set in early; few knew how to use the new machines to advantage, and we settled back with traditional courses to drip feed the whole ability range in three, four or five periods a week, justifying this by saying that what had been good enough for the selected few was surely good enough for the rest.

But this slogan, stemming often from an egalitarian heart rather than from a rational head, failed to convince many of the 'pressed' majority that French, as it was taught, was for them. So, *autres temps autres cours*. The new courses passed rapidly from publishers' shelves to stockrooms and classrooms, attractively packaged to win over the new clientele. But still success was elusive. Morale went from low to lower. It was not only that the children rated compulsory French, along with RE and music, at the top of the un-pops, colleagues from other departments looked askance at language teachers still shovelling it in, or trying to shovel it in, for the simple reason that they had it and the children hadn't.

Gradually the drip feed method has come to be questioned. The metaphor was false. In hospitals the dripping blood, carefully matched to suit each patient, gives life. In schools, four or five drips a week of French administered from the same container to all varieties of pupil often ensured the death of interest long before the three year sentence expired.

Always at the back of our minds was the disturbing realisation that of all subjects offered to children at school, modern languages carried a fatal weakness; they could be learned best elsewhere than in a classroom.

Given the right circumstances two or three months in a foreign speaking environment could do more to get a child to acquire a language than two or three years forced feeding in a school. When I pointed this out once in an article I was accused of wanting to de-school French. But clearly a couple of months abroad in a family couldn't be organised for every child here who wanted a language. And now a new movement has begun, by which teachers have started to supplement or modify existing approaches by providing intensive language experience in a foreign language. Sometimes this involves a carefully prepared trip abroad, sometimes the course will be laid on in a school and last for little more than a day, sometimes the intensive experience is undergone for half a day in a specially prepared language bath.

Judging merely from the experiments described in the preceding pages, such projects are rewarding and successful, giving the same kind of boost to learning and teaching as we have all known to result from an exchange abroad. But if the experiments make sense they also make work. None of the projects here described has failed to make extra demands on staff time, not merely during the time the course or visit was taking place, but even more so beforehand, when preparatory material of all kinds was being conceived and devised. But once the idea is launched and the experience established as a regular event then pressure reduces, and with the level of success both for pupils and teachers at last raised, morale moves upward too, and the appetite grows with eating.

It might justifiably be said that this increase in morale, this shot in the arm resulting from the intensive experience is really the most valuable outcome of such experiments. For they put a premium on inventiveness and vision in those organising the experience, and without vision the subject goes dead. It may be thought that some of the projects here described are a bit pedestrian, but this is good. For one thing such modest suggestions can be taken up by the least confident of teachers, and then improved upon. It's interesting and understandable that some of the projects concentrate almost too exclusively on improving the students' understanding of grammar with a view to improving examination results. In the present, perhaps regrettable climate, this can be accepted as a touch of realism, but even in such courses, almost always another aspect of reality creeps in, and one which needs surely to be developed. Several of the courses aimed to equip all the pupils attending with a minimum of survival language, which even now is too little tested by examinations. An individual and useful example of this happening is seen in the Interpreter's certificate offered by Archbishop Michael Ramsey School (see page 69). This and the new thirteen-plus tests developed in Oxfordshire and York point the way ahead, and to a Britain where tourists from the continent will be surprised to find that they can in fact ask the natives for information in the street or the store or the station, and expect to get a reply in French or even in German or

Spanish; while abroad, the young Briton will astonish the locals by being able to ask for a meal, a drink or a lift in the language of the country, with the fluency of those Dutch, Danes or Norwegians who surprise us so much by their command of English.

If we are going to concentrate on intensive courses preparing pupils to face and cope with real situations here and abroad we teachers should expect to broaden the scope of our own experience. Such demands should be welcome as an incitement to exploration not merely of language but of life. The language teachers who have a night out in Hamburg or Marseilles or Barcelona and who use the experience merely to study the more obscure forms of local slang, aren't using the place for what it's meant. Nor are they making the best use of it themselves. But if they do, if they enjoy themselves, make contacts because they want to be sociable, they won't be able to avoid absorbing aspects of the foreign culture as well as some of the language. They come back after tasting various aspects of life able in themselves to embody part of the foreignness of the country whose language is being learned, and offer the language as it were through the foreignness. And in offering intensive language experience to pupils, this foreign reality is more easily made apparent than in a classroom lesson. In addition, while teachers extend their experience in myriad ways, they actually grow, and the children begin to grow too and when this happens a sadly too often forgotten reason for teaching and learning a foreign language again becomes apparent.

The introduction of intensive courses of all kinds casts a welcome shadow, or should do, over the initial training and the in-service training of language teachers. Clearly such students need to be involved, in as many ways as possible, with the intensive experience already operating in schools, and if none are operating, the institution itself should set them up, using its own students. How welcome students are to schools as additional resources to speak and listen and advise individual pupils and small groups. This function which students can do so well and learn so much from is relevant whether the course is taking place on a Saturday in a familiar classroom, or in an *Auberge de jeunesse* in St Valéry-en-Caux. And on such occasions it is important for the student not to be used merely as an extra adult, a kind of prefect, added at the last moment to the group, but to be creatively involved in the preparation and planning of the materials for the course or the trip itself.

But remembering the point just made above, that teachers need to be encouraged to explore not merely aspects of a foreign language, but also aspects of foreign life, preparatory courses should also include opportunities, (and these should be organised by themselves, and not laid on like a school trip) perhaps to work for a few weeks in a *Colonie de vacances*, having previously done the few days training required by most *colonies*. Perhaps they should go on one of the *vendanges* working parties such as are offered by Concordia. Or in the summer take a job as interpreter on a Rhinesteamer for English tourists, or with a party visiting the top twenty bullfights in Spain. They need to be introduced to the ways of finding or even creating holiday jobs abroad for when they start teaching full time, and get used to the idea that they don't necessarily have to wait for grants to get them abroad.

On the other hand it is clear that authorities, local or national, need to be persuaded to make the task of teachers organising intensive courses for children as easy as possible. This is not only a matter of providing help for needy children, teachers responsible for travelling groups also require help, and the availability of hostels to accommodate foreign children or hostels abroad belonging to the local authority is an important incentive to teachers organising an intensive experience. The hostels in Dieppe belonging to Leicestershire are the envy of many non-Leicestershire teachers - how many others have followed suit?

There is an impediment to foreign travel for the young which central government needs urgently to remove, and which (surprisingly) HMI have failed to destroy. This is the cost of a child's passport. Those group passports are no answer, and are often an extra headache to the teacher in charge. Nor is the card you can buy for a day trip. What is needed is a cheap passport for children in full-time education. At present it costs £5 for a passport; this should be replaced by a junior passport which lasts until the age of 21, thus acting as a long term encourager for students to repeat their trips abroad as they grow older.

Reciprocal courses provide another form of the intensive experience, which can be doubly rewarding. The York example, given in Chapter 10 relies on the availability of academics and a number of well practised students, but surely colleges and departments all over the country could gain experience and gratitude by offering such a service to their neighbour schools in this way? It was however significant that in one of the cases described in this book, the training institution could not help the school because they had already started their holidays while the school was still working! There are other reciprocal opportunities which need to be explored, expecially suitable for schools where the homes are mostly too modest to want or even to be able to take a foreign guest. An underused hostel in the off season can provide accommodation for a dozen foreign visitors, who are then attached individually to native guides from the English school, who will have prepared their patter in the foreign language to make the visit doubly worthwhile.

As several writers point out, the introduction of intensive courses or intensive visits does not work miracles. It makes great demands on diplomatic skills. Heads need to be persuaded to grant days off, or even to re-adjust the timetable, colleagues need to be induced perhaps to relinquish pupils on occasion, caretakers and cooks are often essential cooperators; advisers need to be used as bulldozers or even tranquillisers.

But in spite of extra demands this new movement introducing the intensive language experience must not be allowed to peter out. It contains the germ of an important revival in the teaching of modern languages, and this means, quite simply, an improvement in the education of children.

Bibliography

The following bibliography lists books and articles dealing with the theory and practice of various forms of intensive language teaching. It does not, however, include examples of courses or teaching materials, which are referred to and listed in the preceding chapters of this book.

ABBOTT, H A

Intensive courses, in 'Three experiments in teaching languages' *Adult Education* 43, 5 (1971), pp. 299-301.

Acount of an intensive French course for adult beginners in an evening class.

BEARDSMORE, J E

Intensive language courses for third years *ILEA Modern Language Centre Bulletin* Autumn 1976, pp. 9-13

Report of experimental end-of-term courses for mid-secondary pupils opting for further language study.

BONNEKAMP, Udo

Intensivekurse: Versuch einer didaktischen Ortsbestimmung *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen* (Berlin), 26, 2 (1973), pp. 97-103

Comments on objectives, duration and evaluation of intensive courses.

BREWER, M R

(i) Intensive teaching *NALA Journal* 6 (1975), pp. 33-8.
(ii) Intensive courses better than drip-feed? *Times Educational Supplement* 21.3.75, p. 31 (*Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts* 75-274).

The author discusses his own experience of intensive course work and presents the case for its wider application.

CARROLL, J B

The prediction of success in intensive language training, in Glaser, R, *(editor) Training research and education* University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 1962, pp. 86-136.

Comments on selection procedures for intensive courses, with an account of relevant research and test development. Refers to courses for US military personnel.

CHAMP, M de

Training for VSO *Times Educational Supplement* 12.1.73, p.28

Short account of three-week foreign language courses for recruits to Voluntary Service Overseas.

COUTTS, Jennifer

Industrial language training *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 12, 1, (1974), pp. 11-21 and 27. *(Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts* 75-60).

Describes the design and teaching of a three-week English course for airport and airline personnel.

DENIG, Friedrich

Fremdsprachen-Intensivkurse in lernpsychologischer Sicht *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen* (Berlin), 26, 2 (1973), pp. 103-6.

Considers the effectiveness of intensive learning in comparison with conventional language courses.

DONSKOV, Andrew

An intensive method of language teaching *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), 29, 4 (1973), pp. 36-40 (*Language Teaching Abstracts* 74-42).

Describes a simulated Russian language environment for university students.

FRANK, Ted E

A practical approach to intensive German *Die Unterrichtspraxis: for the teaching of German* (Philadelphia), 6,1 (Spring 1973), pp. 5-8.

Account of a German programme for American university students.

FRINK, Orrin

Intensive language training Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, 1967. (Occasional Papers in Language, Literature and Linguistics: Series A, 4). Eric microfiche: ED 021 488.

Traces the development of intensive language courses in the USA from the Second World War and considers fundamental principles of intensive tuition.

GILL, Marilyn

Cours d'immersion totale: problèmes théoriques et pratiques *IUT: Bulletin Pédagogique: Langues Vivantes* 24 (December 1975), pp. 9-18.

Considers the methodological characteristics, organisation and duration of total-immersion courses.

HAWKINS, E W

Intensive courses - some possible patterns *Times Educational Supplement* 20.2.70, pp. 44-5. (*Language Teaching Abstracts* 70-311).

Gives details of some experimental intensive courses in school and university; considers course requirements and uses of techniques.

HAWKINS, Eric

Modern language study for the serious linguist *Trends in Education* (London) 1 (1976) pp. 4-12.

Includes references to intensive courses.

HORNE, Kibby

Optimum class size for intensive language instruction *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Mo), 54, 3 (1970), pp. 189-95. (*Language Teaching Abstracts* 70-328).

Suggests approaches to various organisational problems in intensive course work.

HOSKIN, Keith

The significance of the method *Times Educational Supplement* 2.4.76, p. 48.

Discusses reasons for slow acceptance of intensive language teaching methods in British education.

INGRAM, Frank, and others

A programme for listening comprehension *Slavic and East European Journal* (Urban, Ill), 19, 1 (1975) pp. 1-10

Describes an intensive programme in Russian listening comprehension for university students.

Modern Languages Extra *Times Educational Supplement* 31.10.75, pp. 33-42.
Contains several articles on various aspects of intensive language courses.

OBANYA, Pai

Improving language aptitude through intensive foreign language training: a short pilot study *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics* (Louvain), 20 (1973), pp. 11-19.

Investigation of the effect of intensive language learning on achievement and aptitude scores.

REE, Harry

A licence to learn languages *Times Educational Supplement* 8.12.72, p.4.

Argues the case for abandoning school-based 'driblet' language learning in favour of intensive courses.

RICHARDSON, Horst F

The teaching of college German under a modular system *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Mo), 57, 4 (1973), pp. 189-94. (*Language Teaching Abstracts* 74-72).

Discusses the advantages and disadvantages of an intensive modular system for students and teachers.

RIX, David

The all-in Russian chat show *Times Educational Supplement* 26.10.73, p. 51.

Describes a one-year inter-school sixth form Russian 'O' level course.

SPRISSLER, Manfred

Fremdsprachenunterricht in Intensivkursen - Probleme und Perspektiven *Moderna Språk* (Saltsjö-Duvnäs, Sweden), 68, 4 (1974), pp. 348-63.

General survey of intensive language courses giving attention to objectives, duration, materials and techniques.

SPRISSLER, Manfred, and Harald Weinrich, *editors*

Fremdsprachenunterricht in Intensivkursen Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, Berlin, etc, 1972. (Sprache und Literatur, 74).

Contains descriptions of various course projects, views of contributors on methodological problems, accounts of materials development and suggestions for curricular integration of intensive course work. Bibliography.

STARKEY, Hugh

Cambridgeshire trains them *Educational Exchange* 21 (Winter 1975), p. 6.

Brief account of three-day residential courses for CSE candidates staffed by foreign language assistants.

TUCKER, P J

Intensive courses *Times Educational Supplement* 26.10.73, p. 51

Brief discussion of one-term courses in French, German and Spanish.

VAN ABBE, Derek

Intensive courses: the present position *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 9, 1 (1971), pp. 27-31. *(Language Teaching Abstracts* 71-323).

Considers course planning requirements in relation to degrees of intensivity, student attainment and objectives.